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BY

WILLIAM MATHEWS, LL.D.

TWELFTH EDITION.

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TO

HON. HENRY W. PAINE, LL.D.,

OF BOSTON, MASS.,

IN MEMORY OF A LIFE-LONG FRIENDSHIP, BEGUN IN MY SCHOOL-BOY DAYS, WHEN, AS MY TEACHER,

"tu solebas
Meas esse aliquid putare nugas,"

THIS BOOK IS INSCRIBED

WITH THE AFFECTIONATE REGARDS OF

THE AUTHOR.

CONTENTS.

I. Thomas De Quincey, - - - 9
II. Robert South, - - - - 58
III. Charles H. Spurgeon, - - 81
IV. Recollections of Judge Story, 97
V. Moral Grahamism, - - - - 117
VI. Strength and Health, - - - 129
VII. Professorships of Books and Reading, - 136
VIII. The Morality of Good Living, - 159
IX. The Illusions of History, - - - 171
X. Homilies on Early Rising, - - 229
XI. Literary Triflers, - - - - 237
XII. Writing for the Press, - - 256
XIII. The Study of the Modern Languages, - 263
XIV. Working by Rule, - - - 272
XV. Too Much Speaking, - - - 279
XVI. A Forgotten Wit, - - - 287
XVII. Are We Anglo-Saxon? - - - 299
XVIII. A Day at Oxford, - - - 307
XIX. An Hour at Christ's Hospital, - - 327
XX. Book-Buying, - - - - 336
XXI. A Pinch of Snuff, - - - - 347

THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

ABOUT twenty years ago there might have been seen flitting about the rural lanes in the neighborhood of Edinburgh, Scotland, a strange, diminutive, spectral-looking being, clad in a motley costume, with his hat hung over the back of his head, his neck-cloth twisted like a wisp of straw, and altogether so grotesque-looking, that you could not help stopping to look at him, and wondering to what race, order, or age of human beings he belonged. As you stopped to look at him, you found *him* also stopping in suspicious alarm, and looking back at you; and then suddenly, like some ticket-of-leave man, hastily moving on, and, as if fearful of being caught, darting round the first turning, and disappearing from view. What was your surprise when it was whispered in your ear that in this fragile and unsubstantial figure,— this dagger of lath,— this ghostly body resting on a pair of immaterial legs, which you could have "trussed with all its apparel into an eelskin"— resided one of the most potent and original spirits that ever dwelt in a tenement of clay! And how was your surprise deepened, when you were further told that this singular being,— this migratory and almost disembodied intellect,— this little wandering anatomy, topped with a brain, whom you had found so shy, as if he had "feared each bush an officer," — was one of the subtlest thinkers, and the greatest

masters of English prose, in this century; in a word, the far-famed "Opium-Eater," Thomas De Quincey! It is the character and writings of this extraordinary man, and most unique and original genius, that we purpose to consider in this essay.

Among all the charmed names of modern English literature, is there probably any other English author whose works are read and re-read with such feelings of delight, wonder, and admiration as those of De Quincey? Glancing over the books that *are* books on his shelves, each the precious life-blood of a master-spirit, "the purest efficacy and extraction of that living spirit that bred them," does the scholar's eye rest on any with which it would cost him a keener pang to part, than with the writings of this great *magister-sententiarum*,— this Aquinas-Richter,— this arch-dreamer of dreams, "the Opium-Eater?" Read wherever the English language is spoken, he is by universal acknowledgment the most powerful and versatile master of that tongue in our time,— the acutest, and at the same time the most gorgeous and eloquent writer of English prose in the nineteenth century. Where, in the entire range of our later literature, will you find an intellect at once so solid and so subtle, so enormous learning conjoined with such power of original thinking, so daring, eccentric wit and grotesque fun with such sharpness and severity of style? Whatever the subject he discusses, whether the character of the Cæsars or the Aristocracy of England,— Homer and the Homeridæ, or Nichols's System of the Heavens,— Lessing's Laocoon, or the English Corn-Laws,—War, or Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts,— Casuistry, or Dinner, Real and Reputed, — Miracles, or Secret Societies,— Logic, Political Economy,

or the Sphinx's Riddle,— he treats all in the same fascinating, yet subtle and searching manner, investing them with the charms of learning and scholarship, wit and humor, and combining, as have rarely before been combined, the rarely harmonizing elements of severe logic and exuberant fancy.

Who, that has once read it, will ever forget that wondrous paper on "The English Mail Coach?" — that coach on which he rode, and on which it was "worth five years of life to ride," after the battle of Talavera,— rode as if borne on the wings of a mighty victory flying by night through the sleeping land, "that should start to its feet at the words they came to speak?" What marvellous word-painting in the sketch entitled "The Spanish Nun," and in the essay on "Modern Superstitions,"— particularly in the descriptions of the phantoms which haunt the traveler in trackless deserts, and of the strange voices which are heard by those who sail upon unknown seas! What lover of the horrible will ever forget the weird, snake-like fascination of that masterpiece of powerful writing in which De Quincey's slow, sustained, long-continued method of following a subject reaches a climax in his art of dealing with the feeling of terror,— we mean the "Three Memorable Murders?" Anything more fearfully thrilling than the description of Williams, the murderer, with his ghastly face, in whose veins ran, not life-blood, that could kindle into a blush of shame, but a sort of green sap,— with his eyes that seemed frozen and glazed, as if their light were all converged upon some victim lurking in the background, and the oiliness and snaky insinuation of his demeanor, that counteracted the repulsiveness of his physiognomy,— who, if you had

run against him in the street, would have offered the most gentlemanly apologies, hoping that the mallet under his coat, his hidden instrument of murder, had not *hurt* you! — anything more horrible than this never froze the blood, or held the spirit petrified in terror's hell of cold. Compared with the spell worked by this mighty magician, the necromancy of Monk Lewis is tame; the stories with which Ann Radcliffe, Miss Crowe, Schiller, and even the Baron Reichenbach himself, make the blood run cold, the nerves prick, and the hair stand on end, are dull and insipid; and the enchantments of all the other high-priests of the supernatural, cheap and vulgar.

Again, with what a magnetism does De Quincey hold us in the "Retreat of a Tartar Tribe," a paper recording a section of romantic story "not equalled," he says, "since the retreat of the fallen angels!" What a *fluctus decumanus* of rhetoric is his "Vision of a Sudden Death,"—a tale as mystically fearful as "The Ancient Mariner." With what a climax of painful incident, beginning with an absolute minimum of interest, does he chain our attention in "The Household Wreck!" How he thrills us with the fiery eloquence of the Confessions, and entrances us with the solemn, sustained, and lyrical raptures of the "Suspiria," and the "Dream Fugue" following his "Vision of a Sudden Death!" What a power he exhibits of seizing the impalpable and air-drawn scenery of dreams, and embodying it in impassioned language,—a faculty which nowhere else, in the whole compass of literature, has been so vividly displayed, as in that piece, so daring in its imaginative sweep, the final climax of his "Joan of Arc!" Dip wherever we will into this author's writings, we find on every page examples of the same narrative power, the

same depth and keenness of philosophic criticism, the same psychological subtlety detecting the most veiled aspects of things, the same "quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles" of fancy, relieving the severity of the profoundest thoughts, the same dazzling fence of rhetoric, the same imperial dominion over the resources of expression, and the same sustained, witching melody of style. In his curious brain the most opposite elements are united; "fire and frost embrace each other."

At once colossal and keen, De Quincey's intellect seems capable of taking the profoundest views of men and things, and of darting the most piercing glances into details; it has an eagle's eye to gaze at the sun, and the eye of a cat to glance at things in the dark; is quick as a hawk to pounce upon a brilliant falsehood, yet as slow as a ferret to pursue a sophism through all its mazes and sinuosities. Now meditative in gentle thought, and anon sharp in analytic criticism; now explaining the subtle charm of Wordsworth's poetry, and again unravelling a knotty point in Aristotle, or cornering a lie in Josephus; to-day penetrating the bowels of the earth with the geologist, to-morrow soaring through the stellar spaces with the astronomer; it seems exactly fitted for every subject it discusses, and reminds you of the elephant's lithe proboscis, which with equal dexterity can uproot an oak or pick up a pin. Of this universality of his genius one who knew him well says, that in theology his knowledge was equal to that of two bishops; in metaphysics he could puzzle any German professor; in astronomy he outshone Professor Nichol; in chemistry he could outdive Samuel Brown; and in Greek, excite to jealousy the shades of Porson and Samuel Parr. In short, to borrow an illustration of Macaulay, it is hardly an exaggeration to say of

the Opium-Eater's intellect, that it resembled the tent which the fairy Paribanou gave to Prince Ahmed,—"Fold it, and it seemed a toy for the hand of a lady; spread it, and the armies of powerful sultans might repose beneath its shade."

With all this capaciousness and subtlety, however, De Quincey's is, at the same time, of all intellects the most vagrant and capricious,—scorning above all things the beaten track, doing nothing by square, rule, and compass, and never pursuing any path of inquiry, without digression, for ten minutes together. Whatever the subject he announces to be under discussion, the title of one of his papers affords you no key to its contents. Like Montaigne, who in his chapter on Coaches treats only of Alexander and Julius Cæsar, or like the writer on Iceland, who begins his chapter, "Of the Snakes of Iceland," by saying "There are *no* snakes in Iceland,"—De Quincey contents himself often with the barest allusion to his theme, and strays into a thousand tempting bye-paths, leading off whole leagues therefrom,—"winding like a river at its own sweet will,"—shedding "a light as from a painted window" on the most trivial objects,—but profoundly indifferent whether, at the end of his disquisition, he will have made any progress toward the goal for which he started. Like a fisherman, he throws out his capacious net into the ocean of learning, and sweeps in everything, however miscellaneous or motley its character. Hence, in reading his logical papers, you declare him the prince of desperate jokers; reading his *jeux d'esprit*, you are ready with Archdeacon Hare to pronounce him *the great logician of our times*. "Oh, Mr. North! Mr. North!" shouts the Ettrick Shepherd in one of the "Noctes," when De Quincey is about to refute one of his

post-prandial propositions, "I'm about to fa' into Mr. De Quinshy's hauns, sae come to my assistance, for I canna thole, being pressed up backward, step by step, intell a corner, till an argument that's ca'd a clincher clashes in your face, and knocks your head in sic force against the wa', that your crown gets a clour, leaving a dent in the wainscot."

Fully to estimate an author, we must know the man; and therefore, before entering upon a more critical notice of the Opium-Eater's genius, let us glance at some of the more notable facts of his life and character. Thomas De Quincey was born at Greenhayes, near Manchester, in 1785. His father, a foreign merchant, who began life with what has been termed "the dangerous fortune of £6,000," prospered so well in business that, when he died of consumption in his thirty-ninth year, he left to his widow and six young children a fortune of £30,000 and a pleasant seat in the place just named. This "imperfectly despicable man," as De Quincey calls him in allusion to his commercial position, rarely saw his children; and it was, therefore, the more fortunate that they had so good a mother, a well-educated, pious woman, who spared no pains to promote their welfare and happiness. Thomas, the son, came into the world, as he tells us, upon that tier of the social scaffolding which is the happiest for all good influences. Agur's prayer was realized for him; he was neither too high, nor too low,—too rich, nor too poor. High enough he was to see models of good manners, of self-respect, and of simple dignity; obscure enough to be left in the sweetest of solitudes.

He was a singularly small and delicate child,—with a large brain, and a most acute nervous system, ill clad

with flesh,—which made him the victim of those ills and miseries of boyhood from which the poet Cowper, in *his* early years, so keenly suffered. In his infancy he was afflicted for more than two years with ague; an affliction which was compensated by the double share of affection lavished upon him by his mother and sisters, by whom he was made the pet of the family, and regarded as one of the sanctities of home. When, in after years, like Marcus Aurelius, he thanked Providence for the separate blessings of his childhood, he was wont to single out as worthy of special commemoration, that "he lived in a rustic solitude; that this solitude was in England; that his infant feelings were moulded by the gentlest of sisters, and not by horrid pugilistic brothers; and, finally, that he and they were dutiful and loving members of a pure, holy and magnificent church."

A life so encompassed and hallowed seems specially adapted to develop his remarkable mental idiosyncrasies, and to intensify his exquisite sensibilities; but he was speedily to learn that there is no earthly seclusion inviolable to the inroad of sorrow; and suddenly, the whole complexion of the world was changed for him by an affliction that remained apparently an abiding grief through life, the death of his "gentlest of sisters," Elizabeth, the superb development of whose head was the astonishment of science. The marvelous passage in which he tells us how he bewailed the loss of this sister, and describes his feelings when he stole silently and secretly up to the chamber where the body lay, and, softly entering the room, closed the door, and found himself alone with the dead,—when, catching a glimpse from the open window of the scenery outside, he con-

trasted the glory and the pomp of nature, redolent of life and beauty, with the little body, from which all life had fled, lying so still upon its bed,—"the frozen eyelids, the darkness that seemed to steal from beneath them, the marble lips, the stiffening hands laid palm to palm, as if repeating the supplications of closing anguish,"—is one of the most beautiful pieces of prose in our language.

"Could these be mistaken for life? Had it been so, wherefore did I not spring to those lips with tears and never-ending kisses? But so it was *not*. I stood checked for a moment; awe, not fear, fell upon me; and whilst I stood, a solemn wind began to blow — the saddest that ear ever heard. It was a wind that might have swept the fields of mortality for a thousand centuries. Many times since upon summer days, when the sun is about the hottest, I have remarked the same wind arising and uttering the same hollow, solemn, Memnonian, but saintly swell: it is in this world the one great *audible* symbol of eternity. And three times in my life have I happened to hear the same sound in the same circumstances,— namely, when standing between an open window and a dead body on a summer day."

In the same connection, he says:

"God speaks to children also in dreams, and by the oracles that lurk in darkness. But in solitude, above all things, when made vocal to the meditative heart by the truths and services of a national church, God holds with children 'communion undisturbed.' Solitude, though it may be silent as light, is, like light, the mightiest of agencies; for solitude is essential to man. All men come into this world *alone;* all leave it *alone*. Even a little child has a dread, whispering consciousness, that, if he should be summoned to travel into God's presence, no gentle nurse will be allowed to lead him by the hand, nor mother to carry him in her arms, nor little sister to share his trepidations. King and priest, warrior and maiden, philosopher and child, all must walk those mighty galleries alone. The solitude, therefore, which in this world appals or fascinates a child's heart, is but the echo of a far deeper solitude, through which already he has passed, and of another solitude, deeper still, through which he *has* to pass: reflex of one solitude — prefiguration of another."

De Quincey's grief, too deep for tears, would perhaps have hurried him into an untimely grave, had he not been awakened, somewhat rudely, from his reveries, by the

arrival home of his elder brother. This brother was an extraordinary boy, as eccentric in his way as Thomas himself, over whom he tyrannized by the mere force of character. He had a genius for mischief amounting almost to inspiration; "it was a divine *afflatus* which drove him in that direction; and such was his capacity for riding in whirlwinds and directing storms, that he made it his trade to *create* them, in order that he *might* direct them." A strong contrast was this active, mischief-loving, bold, and clever boy to the puny Thomas, whom, naturally enough, he thoroughly despised. His martial nature prompted him to deeds too daring for the meek and gentle nature of the younger, from whom, nevertheless, he exacted the most unquestioning obedience. This obedience was based on the assumption that he himself was commander-in-chief; therefore Thomas owed him military allegiance,—while, as cadet of his house, he owed him suit and service as its head.

Having declared war against the "hands" of a Manchester cotton mill,—one of whose number had insulted them by calling them "bucks," as they passed along Oxford Road home from school, the elder brother made the younger major-general; sometimes directing his movements upon the flank, and sometimes upon the rear of the enemy,—now planting him in ambush, and now as a corps of observation, as the exigencies of the case required. For two entire years, and twice every day in the week, did fearful battle rage between the belligerents with showers of stones and sticks, during which Thomas was thrice a prisoner in the enemy's hands. Arrived at home, the commander issued a bulletin of the engagement, which was read with much ceremony to the housekeeper. Sometimes this document announced a victory, sometimes a defeat; but the conduct

of the major-general was sure to be sharply criticised, whatever the result. Now he was decorated with the Bath, and now he was deprived of his commission. At one time his services merited the highest promotion,—at another, he behaved with a cowardice that was inexplicable, except on the supposition of treachery. Once he was drummed out of the army, but "restored at the intercession of a distinguished lady,"—to wit, the housekeeper.

A most wonderful boy was this brother, who absolutely hated all books, except those which he himself wrote; which were not only numerous, but upon every subject under the sun; so that, if not luminous, he could boast of being the most vo-luminous author of his time. He kept the nursery in a perfect whirl of excitement, giving burlesque lectures "on all subjects known to man, from the Thirty-nine Articles of our English church down to pyrotechnics, leger-demain, magic,—both black and white,—thaumaturgy and necromancy." His most popular treatise was entitled "How to Raise a Ghost; and when you've got him, how to keep him down." He also gave lectures on physics to an audience in the nursery, and tried to construct an apparatus for walking across the ceiling like a fly, first on the principle of skates, and afterward upon that of a humming-top. He was profound on the subject of necromancy, and frequently terrified his young admirers by speculating on the possibility of a general confederation, or solemn league and conspiracy, of the ghosts of all time against the single generation of men at any one time composing the garrison of this earth. He made a balloon; and wrote, and, with his brothers and sisters, performed two acts of a most harrowing tragedy, in which all the personages were beheaded at the end of each act, leaving none to carry on the play, a

perplexity which ultimately caused "Sultan Amurath" to be abandoned to the housemaids. "It is well," observes De Quincey, "that my brother's path in life diverged from mine, else I should infallibly have broken my neck in confronting perils which brought neither honor nor profit."

Thomas De Quincey was scarcely ten years old when he began laying the deep foundations of that wonderful accuracy which he acquired in the Greek and Latin tongues, and storing the cells of his memory with wide and varied information by browsing freely in all the fields of literature. After receiving instruction from a succession of masters, at Bath, at Winkfield, and at Manchester, he began to feel that profound contempt for his tutor which a boy of genius always feels for a pompous pedant; and, indignant because his guardians did not allow him at once to enter himself at the University of Oxford, he ran away at night,—with a small English poet in one pocket, and nine plays of Euripides in the other,—and began wandering about in Wales. Of the ups and downs of his life there, he has given a characteristically vivid account. Sometimes he slept in fine hotels, sometimes on the hillside, with nothing but the heavens to shelter him, fearing lest "while my sleeping face was upturned to the stars, some one of the many little Brahminical-looking cows on the Cambrian hills, one or other, might poach her foot into the centre of my face;" sometimes he dined for the small sum of sixpence; sometimes he wanted a dinner, and was compelled to relieve the cravings of his hunger by plucking and eating the berries from off the hedges; and sometimes he earned a meal and a night's lodging by writing letters for cottagers and for sweethearts.

Weary of these aimless wanderings, he turned his

back on Wales, and next found himself penniless and without a friend, in the solitude of London. And now began that painful, yet marvellous and intensely interesting episode in his history, which he has so vividly portrayed in the "Confessions." Now began that wearing life, which chills the spirits, saps the morality, and turns the blood to gall,—waiting day after day at a usurer's office, perpetually listening to fresh excuses for delay, and fresh demands for the preparation of fresh securities. Strangest and most thrilling of written experience,—where, in any autobiography, at least, shall we find its equal? Why, instead of letting these vultures keep him in suspense till he was on the verge of starvation, he did not try to earn a living by his pen, or by teaching, is a mystery. Not only would he receive as heir, in four years more,—for he was now seventeen, —£4,000 or £5,000, an almost fabulous sum for a literary man of that period, but he had abundant resources against want in his teeming imagination and elegant scholarship. So great and accurate were his classical attainments, that his master, more than a year before, had proudly pointed him out to a stranger, with the remark: "That boy could harangue an *Athenian* mob better than you or I could address an *English* one." Moreover, we find him, soon after this, gravely weighing the propriety of writing a remonstrance in Greek to the Bishop of Bangor, concerning some fancied insult received at the hands of that learned prelate. De Quincey himself tells us that he wielded the Greek language "with preternatural address for varying the forms of expression, and for bringing the most refractory ideas within the harness of Grecian phraseology."

Of this accomplishment he was never inclined to vaunt; for any slight vanity which he might connect with a power so rarely attained, and which, under ordinary circumstances, so readily transmutes itself into disproportionate admiration of the author, in him, he tells us, was absolutely swallowed up in the tremendous hold taken of his entire sensibilities at that time by our English literature. Already at fifteen he had made himself familiar with the great English poets, and had appreciated the subtle charm of Wordsworth's poetry, when not fifty persons in England, who had read the sneering criticisms of the Edinburgh Review, knew who the poet that had cautioned men against "growing double," was. Here we cannot help quoting from his "Brief Appraisal of the Greek Literature," a noble passage in which, in spite of his admiration of the Hellenic genius, he confesses the superiority of the English: "It is," he says, "a pitiable spectacle to any man of sense and feeling, who happens to be really familiar with the golden treasures of his own ancestral literature, and a spectacle which alternately moves scorn and sorrow, to see young people squandering their time and painful study upon writers not fit to unloose the shoes' latchets of many amongst their own compatriots; making painful and remote voyages after the drossy refuse, when the pure gold lies neglected at their feet."

To return to the narrative: — unlike Savage's or Chatterton's, De Quincey's misery at this time seems to have been self-inflicted. What reader of the "Confessions" has forgotten his description of this period, when, friendless and alone, he paced up and down the never-ending streets of London, with their pomp and majesty of life,

a prey to the gnawings of hunger, and seeking by constant motion to baffle the piercing cold? What American that has paced those silent thoroughfares after midnight, has not thought of the boy who wandered up and down Oxford street, looking at the long vistas of the lamps, and conversing with the unfortunate creatures who still moved over the cold, hard stones? Who does not remember how, overpowered by the pangs of inanition, he fainted away in Soho Square, and was rescued from the very gates of death by a poor girl, who administered to him a tumbler of spiced wine, bought with money which destitution had compelled her to earn by sin? Whose heart has not been touched by the story of "Poor Anne"? Her wrongs and sorrows, it has been well said, have doubtless caused many prayers to be breathed for others who, like herself, have been the victims of man's dishonor and sin.

For more than sixteen weeks De Quincey was a prey to hunger, the bitterest that a man can suffer and survive. During all this time he slept in the open air, and subsisted on a precarious charity. At last he found an asylum, better at least than a stone door-step for a night's lodging,—a large, empty house, peopled chiefly with rats. There at night he would lie down on the bare floor, with a dusty bundle of law-papers for a pillow, and a cloak and an old sofa-covering for bed-clothes; while, for a companion, he had a poor, friendless girl,—a deserted child, about ten years old,—who nestled close to him for warmth and protection against the ghosts which, to her infant imagination, peopled the hours of darkness. But it was to "poor Anne" that he looked for the chief solace of his miserable life. He never knew

her surname, and, as he always depended upon finding her, he did not think it necessary to learn more. Parting from her one day with a kiss of brotherly affection, he set out on a business errand to Eton; but when he returned to London, he lost all trace of her. Night after night he returned to the trysting-place, and years after in visits to the city he peered into myriads of faces with the hope of descrying the well-known features; but in vain; poor Ann he never saw more. Again and again would he pace the flags of Oxford street, the "stony-hearted step-mother," and listen again to the tunes which used to solace himself and her in their dreary wanderings, and with tears would exclaim: "How often have I wished that, as in ancient times, the curse of a father was believed to have a supernatural power, and pursue its object with a fatal necessity of fulfilment, even so the benediction of a heart oppressed with gratitude might have a like prerogative; might have power given it from above to chase, to haunt, to waylay, to pursue thee into the central darkness of a London brothel, or, if it were possible, even into the darkness of a grave, there to awaken thee with an authentic message of peace and forgiveness, and of final reconciliation!"

With the loss of Ann his Greek-street life ended; and becoming reconciled to his guardians by a Providential occurrence, he went home, and soon after entered Oxford University as a student. Of his life there at Worcester College, we know almost nothing. It was so hermit-like, that, for the first two years, he computes that he did not utter one hundred words. He had but one conversation with his tutor. "It consisted of three sentences," he says, "two of which fell to his share, one to mine. Ox-

ford, ancient mother! hoary with ancestral honors, time-honored, and, haply it may be, time-shattered power, I owe thee nothing! Of thy vast riches I took not a shilling, though living among multitudes who owed thee their daily bread." When the examinations came, De Quincey went through the first day's trial so triumphantly that one of the examiners said to a resident of Worcester College: "You have sent us to-day the cleverest man I ever met with; if his *vivâ voce* examination to-morrow correspond with what he has done in writing, he will carry everything before him." De Quincey, however, did not wait to be questioned further; but for some reason,— whether self-distrust, or a depression of spirits following a large dose of opium,— packed his trunk, and walked away from Oxford, never to return. In 1804 he made the acquaintance of Charles Lamb. In 1807 he was introduced to Coleridge, for whose vast intellectual powers he had a profound admiration; and, hearing that he was harassed by pecuniary troubles, contrived to convey to him, through Mr. Cottle's hand, the sum of £500. In this generous gift De Quincey was actuated by a pure artistic love of genius and literature. From 1808 to 1829, he passed nine months out of twelve among the lakes and mountains of Westmoreland. He took a lease of Wordsworth's cottage at Grasmere, wedded a gentle and loving wife; and amidst the delights of the lake scenery, a good library of 5000 volumes, lettered friends, and his darling drug, realized the ideal of earthly bliss for which the Roman poet so often sighed, and drank a sweet oblivion of the cares of anxious life. Speaking at this time of Wordsworth's good luck, for whose benefit some person became conveniently defunct whenever he

wanted money, De Quincey says: "So true it is, that, just as Wordsworth needed a place and a fortune, the holder of that place or fortune was immediately served with a notice to surrender it. So certainly was this impressed upon my belief as one of the blind necessities, making up the prosperity and fixed destiny of Wordsworth, that, for myself, had I happened to know of any peculiar adaptation in an estate or office of mine to an existing need of Wordsworth, *forthwith*, and, with the speed of a man running for his life, I would have laid it down at his feet. 'Take it,' I should have said; 'take it, or in three weeks I shall be a dead man.'"

It was in 1804, at the age of 19, that De Quincey first began taking opium, to ease rheumatic pains in the face and head. This dangerous remedy having been recommended to him by a fellow-student at Oxford, he entered a druggist's shop, and, like Thalaba in the witches' lair, wound about himself the first threads of a coil, which, after the most gigantic efforts, he was never able wholly to shake off. Using opium at first to quiet pain, he quickly found that it had mightier and more magical effects, and went on increasing the doses till in 1816 he was taking 320 grains, or 8,000 drops of laudanum a day. What a picture he has given us of the discovery he made! What a revelation the dark but subtle drug made to his spiritual eyes! What an agent of immortal and exalted pleasures! What an apocalypse of the world within him! Here was a panacea for sorrow and suffering, for brain-ache and heart-ache,— immunity from pain, and care, and all human woes. He swallowed a bit of the drug, and lo! the inner spirit's eyes were opened,— a fairy ministrant had burst into wings, waving a wondrous wand,— a fresh tree

of knowledge had yielded its fruit, and it seemed as good as it was beautiful. "Happiness might now be bought for a penny, and carried in the waistcoat pocket; portable ecstasies might now be had, corked up in a pint bottle; and peace of mind sent down in gallons by mail." Here we may observe that De Quincey contradicts the statements which are usually made regarding opium. He denies that it intoxicates, and shows that there is such an insidiousness about it, that it scarcely seems to be a gratification of the *senses*. The pleasure of wine is one that rises to a certain pitch, and then degenerates into stupidity, while that of opium remains stationary for eight or ten hours. Again, the influence of wine tends to disorder the mind, while opium tends to exalt the ideas, and yet to contribute to harmony and order in their arrangement. "The opium-eater feels that the diviner part of his nature is uppermost; that is, the moral affections are in a state of cloudless serenity, and over all is the great light of the majestic intellect."

Up to the middle of 1817 De Quincey judges himself to have been a happy man; and nothing can be more charming than the picture he draws of the interior of his cottage in a stormy winter night, with "warm hearth-rugs, tea from an eternal tea-pot,"— eternal *à parte ante* and *à parte post*, for he drank from eight in the evening till four in the morning,—"a fair tea-maker, shutters closed, curtains flowing in ample draperies on the floor, whilst the wind and rain are raging audibly without,

'As heaven and earth they would together mell.'"

Alas! that this blissful state could not continue! But the very drug which had revealed to him such an abyss of divine enjoyment,— which had given to him the keys of

Paradise, causing to pass before his spirit's eyes a never-ending succession of splendid imagery, the gorgeous coloring of sky and cloud, the pomp of woods and forests, the majesty of boundless oceans, and the grandeur of imperial cities, while to the ears, cleansed from their mortal infirmities, were borne the sublime anthem of the winds and waves, and a sevenfold chorus of hallelujahs and harping symphonies,— this very power became eventually its own avenging Nemesis, and inflicted torments compared with which those of Prometheus were as the bites of a gnat.

Of all the torments which opium inflicts upon its votary, perhaps there is no one more destructive of his peace than the sense of incapacity and feebleness,— of inability to perform duties which conscience tells him he must not neglect. The opium-eater, De Quincey tells us, loses none of his moral sensibilities or aspirations; he wishes and longs as earnestly as ever to realize what he believes possible, and feels to be exacted by duty; but the springs of his will are all broken, and his intellectual apprehension of what is possible infinitely outruns his power, not of execution only, but even of power to attempt. "He lies under the weight of incubus and nightmare; he lies in sight of all that he would fain perform, just as a man forcibly confined to his bed by the mortal languor of a relaxing disease, who is compelled to witness injury or outrage offered to some object of his tenderest love: — he curses the spells which chain him down from motion: he would lay down his life if he might but get up and walk; but he is powerless as an infant, and cannot even attempt to rise."

Of the cup of horrors which opium finally presents to

its devotees, De Quincey drank to the dregs, especially in his dreams at night, when the fearful and shadowy phantoms that flitted by his bedside made his sleep insufferable by the terror and anguish they occasioned. Of these dreams, as portrayed in the "Confessions" and some of his other writings, we doubt if it would be possible to find a parallel in any literature, ancient or modern. Sometimes they are blended with appalling associations, — encompassed with the power of darkness, or shrouded with the mysteries of death and the gloom of the grave. Now they are pervaded with unimaginable horrors of oriental imagery and mythological tortures; the dreamer is oppressed with tropical heat and vertical sunlight, and brings together all the physical prodigies of China and Hindóstan. He runs into pagodas, and is fixed for centuries at the summit, or in secret rooms; he flees from the wrath of Brahma through all the forests of Asia; Vishnu hates him; Seeva lays wait for him; he comes suddenly on Isis and Osiris; he has done a deed, they say, at which the ibis and the crocodile tremble; he is buried for a thousand years in stone coffins, with mummies and sphinxes, in narrow chambers at the heart of eternal pyramids. He is kissed with cancerous kisses by crocodiles; and laid, confounded with all unutterable, slimy things, amongst reeds and Nilotic mud.

"Over every form, and threat, and punishment, and dim sightless incarceration, brooded a sense of eternity and infinity that drove me into an oppression as of madness. Into these dreams only, it was, with one or two slight exceptions, that any circumstances of physical horror entered. All before had been moral and spiritual terrors. But here the main agents were ugly birds, or snakes, or crocodiles, especially the last. The cursed crocodile became to me the object of more horror than almost all the rest. I was compelled to live with him; and (as was always the case, almost, in my dreams) for centuries. I escaped sometimes, and found myself in Chinese

houses with cane tables, etc. All the feet of the tables, sofas, etc., soon became instinct with life: the abominable head of the crocodile, and his leering eyes, looked out at me, multiplied into a thousand repetitions; and I stood loathing and fascinated. And so often did this hideous reptile haunt my dreams, that many times the very same dream was broken up in the very same way: I heard gentle voices speaking to me (I hear everything when I am sleeping), and instantly I awoke: it was broad noon, and my children were standing, hand in hand, at my bedside; come to show me their colored shoes, or new frocks, or to let me see them dressed for going out. I protest that so awful was the transition from the damned crocodile, and the other unutterable monsters and abortions of my dreams, to the sight of innocent *human* natures and of infancy, that, in the mighty and sudden revulsion of mind, I wept, and could not forbear it, as I kissed their faces."

Anon, there would come suddenly a dream of a far different character,—a tumultuous dream,—commencing with music, and a multitudinous movement of infinite cavalcades filing off, and the tread of innumerable armies. The morning was come of a mighty day,—a day of crisis and of ultimate hope for human nature, then suffering mysterious eclipse, and laboring in some dread extremity.

"Somewhere, but I knew not where,—somehow, but I knew not how,—by some beings, I knew not by whom,—a battle, a strife, an agony was traveling through all its stages,—was evolving itself like the catastrophe of some mighty drama, with which my sympathy was the more insupportable, from deepening confusion as to its local scene, its cause, its nature, and its undecipherable issue. I (as is usual in dreams, where, of necessity, we make ourselves central to every movement,) had the power, and yet had not the power, to decide it. I *had* the power, if I could raise myself to will it; and yet again had *not* the power, for the weight of twenty Atlantics was upon me, or the oppression of inexpiable guilt. 'Deeper than ever plummet sounded,' I lay inactive. Then, like a chorus, the passion deepened. Some greater interest was at stake, some mightier cause, than ever yet the sword had pleaded, or trumpet had proclaimed. Then came sudden alarms, hurryings to and fro, trepidations of innumerable fugitives,—I knew not whether from the good cause or the bad; darkness and lights; tempest and human faces; and, at last, with the sense that all was lost, female forms, and the features that were worth all the world to me; and but a moment allowed,—and clasped hands, with heart-breaking partings, and then—everlasting farewells; and with a sigh such as the caves of hell sighed, when the incestuous mother uttered the abhorred name of death, the sound was reverberated,—everlasting farewells! and again, and yet again reverberated,—everlasting farewells!"

When did ever man, like this man, realize "the fierce vexation of a dream"? As with Byron's Manfred, the voice of incantation rang forever in his ears:—

> "Though thy slumber may be deep,
> Yet thy spirit shall not sleep;
> There are shades which will not vanish,
> There are thoughts thou canst not banish;
> — And to thee shall night deny
> All the quiet of her sky."

How fearfully does he make us feel that

> "This is truth the poet sings,
> That a sorrow's crown of sorrows is remembering happier things;"

and we would fain say to him:

> "Drug thy memories, lest thou learn it, lest thy heart be put to proof,
> In the dead unhappy night, and when the rain is on the roof."

Here, were it not needless, we might pause to speak of the egregious folly of those persons who fancy that by swallowing *opium* like De Quincey, they may have De Quincey's visions and dreams. As well might they expect to produce an explosion by touching a match, not to gunpowder, but to a lump of lead. Opium was, indeed, the teasing irritant of De Quincey's genius; but the genius was *in* him, or the visions would not have come. Dryden was most inspired after a dose of salts; but a commonplace man will never be able to dash off an "Alexander's Feast," though he take pills till he bankrupt Brandreth. He will have "all the contortions of the Sibyl without the inspiration." A booby will remain a booby still, though he feed upon the nectar and ambrosia of the gods.

Having yielded to the Circean spells of opium, De Quincey lay from 1817 to 1821 in a kind of intellectual torpor, utterly incapable of sustained exertion. At last, his nightly visions became so insupportable that he deter-

mined to abjure the deadly drug; and, after a desperate struggle, the foul fiend was nearly exorcised. But long after its departure, he suffered most keenly; his sleep was still tumultuous; and like the gates of Paradise to our first parents when looking back from afar, it was still (in the tremendous line of Milton)

"With dreadful faces thronged and fiery arms."

It was at this time that he began those literary labors which have made his fame, and which have enabled the world to see what mighty results he might have accomplished, if opium had not enfeebled his powers. Writing the first part of the "Confessions" in 1821, he from that time plied his pen with great, but fitful industry, on various publications, such as "Blackwood's Magazine," "Tait's," the "North British Review," "Hogg's Instructor," and the "Encyclopaedia Britannica." Till 1827 he continued to live at Grasmere, with occasional visits to London, when he changed his residence for two years to Edinburgh,—after which he took up his abode again among the Westmoreland hills, in a "rich farm-house, flowing with milk and honey, with mighty barns and spacious pastures," near his former cottage at Grasmere. To this charming rural retreat he invited Charles Knight and his family to visit him, in a letter such as only the Opium-Eater could write. "And now, my friend," he urges, "think what a glorious *El Dorado* of milk and butter, and cream cheeses, and all other dairy products, I can offer you morning, noon, and night. You may absolutely bathe in new milk, or even in cream; and you shall bathe, if you like it. I know that you care not much for luxuries for the dinner-table; else, though our luxuries are few and

simple, I could offer you some temptations,—mountain lamb equal to Welsh; char famous to the antipodes; trout and pike from the very lake within twenty-five feet of our door; bread, such as you have never presumed to dream of, made of our own wheat, not doctored and separated by the usual miller's process into fine insip flour, and coarse, that is, merely dirty-looking white, but all ground down together, which is the sole receipt (*experto crede*) for having rich, lustrous, red-brown, ambrosial bread; new potatoes, of celestial earthiness and raciness, which, with us, last to October; and finally, milk, milk, milk—cream, cream, cream, (hear it, thou benighted Londoner!) in which you must and shall bathe." De Quincey's last years were spent at Lasswade, near Edinburgh, Scotland, where he died December 8, 1859, in his seventy-fifth year. During the last three or four years of his life, he suffered exquisite pain from a constant gnawing in the stomach, which impelled him some days to walk fifteen miles at a time, and which he believed was owing to the presence there of a voracious living parasite. But for his obligations to his wife and daughters, he declared, the temptation to commit suicide would have been greater than he could have resisted; and he repeatedly announced his intention of bequeathing his body to the surgeons for a *post mortem* examination into his strange disease.

Physically, De Quincey was a frail, slender-looking man, exceedingly diminutive in stature, with small, clearly-chiselled features, as pale almost as alabaster, a large head, and a singularly high, square forehead. The head showed behind a want of animal force. The lips were curiously expressive and subtle in their character;

the eyes, that seemed to have seen much sorrow, peered out of two rings of darkness; and there was a peculiarly high and regular arch in the wrinkles of his brow, which was "loaded with thought." All that met him were struck with the measured, silvery, yet somewhat hollow and unearthly tones of his voice, the more impressive that the *flow* of his talk was unhesitating and unbroken. Though capable of undergoing a great deal of labor and fatigue, he declares that his body was the very ideal of a base, crazy, despicable human system, and that he "should almost have been ashamed to bequeath his wretched structure to any respectable dog." Of his odd, eccentric character, no adequate account ever has been, or, probably ever will be given, so removed were his from all the normal conditions of human nature. In his boyhood the shiest of children, "naturally dedicated to despondency," he was passionately fond of peace, —had a perfect craze for being despised,—considered contempt as the only security for unmolested repose,— and always sought to hide his accomplishments from the curiosity of strangers. He tells us humorously, and no doubt truthfully, how, after he had reached manhood, he was horrified at a party in London when he saw a large number of guests filing in one by one, and guessed from their looks that they had come to "lionize" the Opium-Eater. It has been questioned if he ever knew what it is "to eat a good dinner," or could even comprehend the nature of such a felicity. He had an ear most perfectly attuned to the enjoyment of "beauty born of murmuring sound," and one of his most exquisite pleasures was listening to instrumental, and especially vocal, music; yet a discord, a wrong note, was agony to him; and it

is said that, on one occasion, he with ludicrous solemnity apostrophized his unhappy fate as one over whom a cloud of the darkest despair had been drawn, because a peacock had just come to live within hearing distance of him, and not only the terrific yells of the accursed biped pierced him to the soul, but the continued terror of their *recurrence* kept his nerves in agonizing tension during the intervals of silence. In this sensitiveness to harsh noises he reminds one of the poet Beattie, who denounces chanticleer for his lusty proclamation of morning to his own and the neighboring farm-yards, in terms hardly merited by a Nero.

In everything that concerned the happiness of others, De Quincey was the very soul of courtesy. A gentleman who visited him repeatedly at Lasswade, tells us that for every woman, however humble, he seemed to have the profoundest reverence; and when, in walking along the country highway together, they met any person in female attire, however lowly or meanly clad,—were she fine lady or servant girl,—De Quincey would turn aside from the road, back up against the hedge, and pulling off his hat, bow and continue bowing profoundly, till she had passed beyond them. While listening to the mythical and fearfully wearisome recital of an old crone at Melrose Abbey, he continued bowing, with his hat off, to the end, with as much deference as if she had been a duchess. A correspondent of a New York journal, who spent some hours at his Scottish home, gives an additional illustration of his tender regard for the feelings of the lowly:—

"There was a few moments' pause in the 'table talk,' when one of the daughters asked our opinion of Scotland and the Scotch. De Quincey had been in a kind of reverie, from which the question aroused him. Turning to us, he said, in a kindly, half-paternal manner, 'The servant that waits at

my table is a Scotch girl. It may be that you have something severe to say about Scotland. I know that I like the English church and dislike many things about the Puritanical Scotch; but I never utter anything that might wound my servant. Heaven knows that the lot of a poor servant girl is hard enough, and if there is any person in the world of whose feelings I am especially tender, it is those of a female compelled to do for us our drudgery. Speak as freely as you choose, but please reserve your censure, if you have any, for the moments when she is absent from the room.' *Un gentilhomme est toujours un gentilhomme*, a man of true sensibility and courtesy will manifest it on all occasions, toward the powerless as well as toward the strong. When the dinner was ended and the waiting girl had left, his eloquent tongue gave the Ultra-Puritanism of Scotland such a castigation, that we looked around us with a shudder, expecting to see the ghost of John Knox stalking into the room, fluid-hot with holy wrath."

Though the author of a profound, philosophic treatise on political economy, De Quincey was in all money matters a child. Brooding over great intellectual problems, he gave no thought to pounds, shillings, and pence, or questions touching the payment of weekly bills. Only the most immediate, craving necessities could extract from him an acknowledgment of the vulgar agencies by which men subsist in civilized society; and only while the necessity lasted, did the acknowledgment exist. He would arrive late at a friend's door, and represent in his usual silvery voice and measured rhetoric, the urgent necessity he had for the immediate and absolute use of a certain sum of money; and if he thought the friend hesitated, or the time seemed long before the required loan was forthcoming,—a loan, perhaps, of seven shillings and sixpence,—he would rummage his waistcoat pocket in search of a document which, he would confidently declare, was an ample security, and which would prove to be, when the crumpled paper was spread out, a bank note for £50! It was the opinion of those who knew him well, that, had the bank note been accepted, his friend would never have heard anything more of the transaction.

Mr. John Hill Burton, in "The Book-Hunter," to which we are indebted for these particulars, has related a variety of other incidents, similarly illustrative of De Quincey's character. Sometimes a visitor of De Quincey, made oblivious of the lapse of time by the charm of his conversation, would discover, at a late hour, that "lang Scots' miles" lay between his host's and his own home. Thereupon De Quincey would volunteer to accompany the forlorn traveler, and guide him through the difficulties of the way; for had not his midnight wanderings and musings made him familiar with all the intricacies of the road? Roofed by a huge wide-awake, which makes his tiny figure look like the stalk of some great fungus, with a lantern of more than common dimensions in his hand, away he goes, down the wooded path, up the steep bank, along the brawling stream, and across the waterfall; and ever as he goes, there comes from him a continued stream of talk concerning the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, and other kindred themes. Having seen his guest home, he would still continue walking on, until, weariness overtaking him, he would take his rest like some poor mendicant, under a hayrick, or in a wet furrow. No wonder that he used to denounce, with fervent eloquence, that barbarous and brutal provision of the law of England which rendered sleeping in the open air an act of vagrancy, and so punishable, if the sleeper could not give a satisfactory account of himself; "a thing," adds Mr. Burton, "which *he* could never give under *any* circumstances." His social habits were as eccentric as everything else pertaining to him. Being detained one evening at Prof. Wilson's in Edinburgh, when in a great hurry, by a shower, he remained nearly a year. Mrs. Gordon, Prof. Wilson's daughter, states that at this time his dose of

laudanum was an ounce a day,—an amount which, though small compared with what he had formerly taken, was sufficient to prostrate animal life in the morning. "It was no unfrequent sight," she says, "to find him in his room, lying upon the rug in front of the fire, his head resting upon a book, with his arms crossed over his breast, plunged into profound slumber. For several hours he would lie in this state, until the effect of the torpor had passed away."

When he was invited to a dinner-party, no one ever thought of waiting dinner for *him*. He came and departed always at his own sweet will, neither burdened with punctualities, nor burdening others by exacting them. "The festivities of the afternoon are far on when a commotion is heard in the hall, as if some dog, or other stray animal had forced its way in. The instinct of a friendly guest tells him of the arrival; he opens the door, and fetches in the little stranger. What can it be? a street-boy of some sort? His costume, in fact, is a boy's duffle great coat, very threadbare, with a hole in it, and buttoned tight to the chin, where it meets the fragments of a parti-colored belcher handkerchief; on his feet are list-shoes, covered with snow, for it is a stormy winter night; and the trousers, —some one suggests that they are inner linen garments blackened with writing-ink; but De Quincey never would have been at the trouble so to disguise them. What can be the theory of such a costume? The simplest thing in the world,—it consisted of the fragments of apparel nearest at hand. Had chance thrown to him a court single-breasted coat, with a bishop's apron, a kilt, and top boots, in these he would have made his entry." One of his peculiarities was an intense dislike for shirts,—of wearing which he was as innocent as Adam. Unlike Coleridge's father, who,

starting on a journey with six shirts, came home wearing the entire half dozen, De Quincey sloughed off this garment almost as soon as his good wife had persuaded him to put it on.

De Quincey was a prodigious reader, had an anaconda-like digestion, and assimilated his mental food with amazing rapidity. An ardent lover of books, he cared nothing for pet editions,—the niceties and luxuries of paper, printing, and binding. Tree-calf and sheep, Turkey-morocco and muslin,—were all one to him. His pursuit of books was like that of the savage who seeks but to appease the hunger of the moment. Mr. Burton says that if his intellectual appetite craved a passage in the Œdipus, or in the Medeia, or in Plato's Republic, he would be content with the most tattered fragment of the volume, if it contained what he wanted; but on the other hand, he would not hesitate to seize upon your tall copy in Russia, gilt and tooled. Nor would he hesitate to lay his sacrilegious hands upon an *editio princeps*,—even to wrench out the twentieth volume of your "Encyclopédie Méthodique" or "Ersch und Gruber," leaving a vacancy like an extracted front tooth, and carrying it off to his den of Cacus. "Some legend there is," says the same amusing writer, "of a book-creditor having forced his way into the Cacus den, and there seen a sort of rubble work inner wall of volumes, with their edges outward; while others, bound and unbound, the plebeian sheepskin and the aristocratic Russian, were squeezed into certain tubs drawn from the washing establishment of a confiding landlady." In common with the whole tribe of book-borrowers, he rarely returned a book loaned to him, folio or quarto, single or one of a set; though sometimes the book was recognized at large, greatly enhanced in value

by a profuse edging of manuscript notes. When short of writing paper, he never hesitated to tear out the leaves of a broad-margined book, whether his own or belonging to another. It is even reported that he once gave in "copy" written "on the edges of a tall octavo *Somnium Scipionis;* and as he did not obliterate the original matter, the printer was rather puzzled, and made a funny jumble between the letter-press Latin and the manuscript English." It is a remarkable fact that, in spite of these piratical proceedings, none of his friends ever complained of him. They never said, as did Southey of Wordsworth, that letting him into one's library was "like letting a bear into a tulip garden."

De Quincey's indifference to the fate of his printed writings is a peculiarity not less marked than the other traits of his strange, prismatic genius. Not till the very end of his life, and then, we believe, only at the suggestion of an American publisher, did he set about collecting his scattered papers,—a feat which he once declared "that not the archangel Gabriel, nor his multipotent adversary, durst attempt." It is to the honor of our country that, like the splendid essays of Macaulay, the twenty-four volumes of the Opium-Eater's writings were first published in Boston; and it would be pleasant to see confirmed a statement we have met with in a New York newspaper, that during the closing years of his life, the broad and brilliant sunrise of his fame in the United States did more than any other single thing to stimulate him to continuous literary labor and to kindle his literary enthusiasm.

Turning from De Quincey the man to De Quincey the author, the first thing that strikes us is the extraordinary depth and compass of his knowledge. He never seems to

put forth all his learning on any subject, nor are there any signs of "cram" in his writings. His thought comes from a brimming reservoir, and never shows the mud at the bottom. Indeed, we know of no man who more completely realizes his own wonderful description of a great scholar, as "one endowed not merely with a great memory, but with an infinite and electrical power of combination, bringing together from the four winds, like the angels of the resurrection, what else were but the dust of dead men's bones, and breathing into them the unity of life."

When we consider the number and variety of the themes he has discussed, many of them of the most recondite, out-of-the-way character, and especially when we think of his digressions, quotations, notes, allusions, and extrajudicial opinions, we are astonished at the vast and eccentric range of his reading, and still more at the tenacity of a memory by which such portentous acquisitions could be held. He seems to have been his own encyclopaedia, quoting, wherever he chanced to be, all that he wished to quote, even dates and references, without the aid of a library. Ranging over all the fields of inquiry, he is perpetually surprising you with side glimpses and hints of truths which he cannot at present follow up. Often on a topic seemingly the most remote from abstract philosophy, through a mere allusion or hint, chasms are opened to you in the depths of speculation, and the ghosts of buried mediaeval problems are made to stalk before you. We know of no other memory which is so large as De Quincey's, and yet so personal; so ample, and yet so accurate; which is at once so objective, and yet so subjective,—giving the vividness of self

to outward acquisition, and to the consciousness of self the enlargement of imperial knowledge.

Again, it is rarely that a scholar, especially one who has spent so much time in the nooks and hidden corners of learning, has been so close an observer of character. All of his works, but especially his "Autobiographic Sketches" and "Literary Reminiscences," are strewn with passages showing that while it was a peculiarity of his intellect to be exquisitely introspective, he was yet marvellously swift in his appreciations of men and things, and noted personal traits with Boswellian minuteness. In discovering motives and feelings by their outward manifestations,— by the most microscopic peculiarities of look, shape, tone, or gesture,— he was as acute as Lavater. Another rare endowment, which he has to a wonderful degree, is the power of detecting resemblances,— hidden analogies,— parallelisms, connecting things otherwise wholly remote. Often, he tells us, he was mortified by compliments to his memory, which, in fact, were due to "the far higher faculty of an electric aptitude for seizing analogies, and, by means of these aerial pontoons, passing over like lightning from one topic to another." To this power we may trace much of the excellence of his criticism, the keenness of penetration with which he sees, not only into the genius, but all round the life of an author. Perhaps no literary critic has equalled him in making incidents in a writer's life, unnoticed by other men, flash light upon his genius; and, again, in making hidden peculiarities of his genius clear up mysteries in his life. Hence he never repeats the old, worn-out commonplaces of criticism, but, breaking away from the traditional views, startles you with opinions as novel as they are acute and ingenious.

Who can forget his original and admirable distinction between *the literature of knowledge* and *the literature of power?* "What," he asks, "do you learn from Paradise Lost? Nothing at all. What do you learn from a cookery book? Something new, something you did not know before, in every paragraph. But would you therefore put the wretched cookery book on a higher level of estimation than the divine poem? What you owe to Milton is not any knowledge, of which a million separate items are still but a million of advancing steps on the same earthly level; what you owe is *power;* that is, exercise and expansion to your own latent capacity of sympathy with the infinite, where every pulse and each separate influx is a step upward,—a step ascending, as upon a Jacob's ladder, from earth to mysterious altitudes above the earth. *All* the steps of knowledge, from the first to the last, carry you farther on the same plane, but could never raise you one foot above your ancient level of earth; whereas the very first step in power is a flight, is an ascending, into another element, where earth is forgotten."

Again: how charming to a lover of intellectual subtlety is his reasoning concerning the Essenes! With what a keenness of philosophical criticism,—with what a prodigality of learning, logic, and illustration,—does De Quincey refute the popular dogmas about Pope; that he was a writer of the Gallic school; that he was a second or third rate poet, and that his distinctive merit was correctness; when he was, in fact, a great, impassioned, musical thinker of social life, who had in his soul innate germs of grandeur, which did not open into power, or which had but an imperfect growth. Again: how adroitly

he unmasks and scalps the superficially omniscient and overrated Brougham, who has "deluged Demosthenes with his wordy admiration!" With how firm a grasp he throttles "Junius"; how keenly he dissects that brilliant mocking-bird, Sheridan; and how hollow the pompous Parr feels in his grip! This exquisite subtlety in discriminating the resemblances and differences of things is one of the most remarkable traits of De Quincey's genius. In this, as in the wide range of his intellectual sympathies, and in his habit of minutely dissecting his own emotions, he resembled Coleridge; but in other respects they stood in almost polar antithesis. De Quincey, it has been truly said, was a Greek; but Coleridge was essentially a German in his culture, tastes, and habits of mind. De Quincey had a dry, acute, critical intellect, piercing as a sword-blade, and as brilliant and relentless; Coleridge was a poet, of "imagination all compact," with a mind of tropical fruitfulness and splendor, and a sensibility as delicate as a woman's. In thus differentiating De Quincey from the "noticeable man, with large, gray eyes," we would not intimate that, with all his intellectual acumen, he had not something far better than this metaphysic, hair-splitting talent. Though he absolutely revels in nice distinctions and scrupulous qualifications, he was not a dry Duns Scotus, a juiceless Thomas Aquinas. While his logic cut like a razor, his imagination burned like a furnace. Though he had a schoolman's passion for logical forms, and could have beaten the enemies of Reuchlin at their own weapons, his rhetorical aptitudes were profound and varied, and his speculative imagination was little less than wonderful in its range and power.

De Quincey's *humor* is of a kind which is not easy to

characterize. Like everything belonging to him, it is odd, unique, as original as his genius. Always playful and stingless, it takes at one time the form of banter, at another of mock dignity. Now it speaks with admiration, or with a dry, business tone of things usually regarded with indignation or horror; now it mocks at gravity, cracks jests upon venerable persons or institutions, quizzes the owls of society, and pulls the beards of dignitaries. At one hour it greets us in the grave robe of the critic, and pokes fun at the learned; at another, in the scarlet dress of the satirist, and blasts hypocrisy with its ridicule; and again it comes to us in motley, with cap and bells, and reminds us of Touchstone's wise fooling and the mingled pathos and bitterness of the poor fool in Lear. One of the commonest forms of De Quincey's playfulness is exaggeration,— the expenditure of pages of the gravest and most elaborate ratiocination upon a trifle,— the devotion of a senior wrangler's analytic powers to the dissection of the merest crotchet; reminding one in this, it has been well said, of a great musical composer, who seats himself before a stately organ, and choosing as his theme some street song, "O dear, what can the matter be?" or "Polly, put the kettle on," pursues it through figures of surpassing pomp and orchestral tumult,— glorifying it into intricate harmonies, and transfiguring its original meanness into bewildering *bravura* and interminable *fantasia*. The following passage from "The English Mail Coach," while it illustrates in some degree De Quincey's peculiar humor, interveined, as it often is, with grave remark, is also a fine specimen of his measured and stately style:

"The modern modes of traveling cannot compare with the mail-coach system in grandeur and power. They boast of more velocity, but not, how-

ever, as a consciousness, but as a fact of our lifeless knowledge, resting upon *alien* evidence; as, for instance, because somebody *says* that we have gone fifty miles in the hour, or upon the evidence of a result, as that actually we find ourselves in York four hours after leaving London. Apart from such an assertion, or such a result, I am little aware of the pace. But, seated on the old mail-coach, we needed no evidence out of ourselves to indicate the velocity. On this system the word was — *Non magna loquimur*, as upon railways, but *magna vivimus*. The vital experience of the glad animal sensibilities made doubts impossible on the question of our speed; we heard our speed, we saw it, we felt it as a thrilling; and this speed was not the product of blind insensate agencies, that had no sympathy to give, but was incarnated in the fiery eyeballs of an animal, in his dilated nostril, spasmodic muscles, and echoing hoofs. This speed was incarnated in the *visible* contagion amongst brutes of some impulse, that, radiating into *their* natures, had yet its centre and beginning in man. The sensibility of the horse, uttering itself in the maniac light of his eye, might be the last vibration of such a movement; the glory of Salamanca might be the first, — but the intervening link that connected them, that spread the earthquake of the battle into the eyeball of the horse, was the heart of man, — kindling in the rapture of the fiery strife, and then propagating its own tumults by motions and gestures to the sympathies, more or less dim, in his servant, the horse.

"But now, on the new system of traveling, iron tubes and boilers have disconnected man's heart from the ministers of his locomotion. Nile nor Trafalgar has power any more to raise an extra bubble in a steam kettle. The galvanic cycle is broken up for ever: man's imperial nature no longer sends itself forward through the electric sensibility of the horse; interagencies are gone in the mode of communication between the horse and his master, out of which grew so many aspects of sublimity under accidents of mists that hid, or sudden blazes that revealed, of mobs that agitated, or midnight solitudes that awed. Tidings, fitted to convulse all nations, must henceforwards travel by culinary process; and the trumpet that once announced from afar the laurelled mail, heart-shaking, when heard screaming on the wind, and advancing through the darkness to every village or solitary house on its route, has now given way for ever to the pot-wallopings of the boiler."

The crowning achievement of De Quincey in this department is his "Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts," which all will admit to be a masterpiece of cynicism, without a parallel in our literature. The principle on which this paper is based, is that everything is to be judged, in an æsthetic point of view, by the end it professes to accomplish, and is to be considered good or bad, — that is, for its own purposes, — according to the degree in which

it accomplishes that end. As Aristotle would say, "The virtue of a thing is to be judged by its end." For example, dirt, according to Lord Palmerston's famous definition, is only "matter in the wrong place." Put it at the bottom of a fruit-tree, and so far is it from being a nuisance, that the dirtier it is the better. So with murder; leave out of view the ultimate purpose of the thing, and take it simply on its own merits, and the more murderous it is, the more does it come up to its fundamental idea. It follows that there are clever, brilliant, even ideal murders, and that they may be criticised by dilettanti and amateurs, like a painting, or statue, or other work of art. In a similar spirit De Quincey claims that a proper proportion of rogues is essential to the proper *mounting* of a metropolis,— that is, the idea is not *complete* without them.

What can be more exquisite than the fooling in the following passage: "Believe me, it is not necessary to a man's respectability that he should commit a murder. Many a man has passed through life most respectably, without attempting any species of homicide, good, bad, or indifferent. It is your first duty to ask yourself, *quid valeant humeri, quid ferre recusent?* — we cannot all be brilliant men in this life. . . . A man came to me as the candidate for the place of my servant, just then vacant. He had the reputation of having dabbled a little in our art, some said, not without merit. What startled me, however, was, that he supposed this art to be part of the regular duties in my service. Now *that* was a thing I would not allow; so I said at once: 'If once a man indulges himself in murder, very soon he comes to think little of robbing; and from robbing he comes next to

drinking and Sabbath-breaking, and from that to incivility and procrastination. Once *begin* upon this downward path, you never know where you are to stop. Many a man has dated his ruin from some murder or other that perhaps he thought little of at the time. *Principiis obsta*,—that's my rule."

Of pathos, we need only cite "The Confessions," "The Vision of a Sudden Death," "Joan of Arc," and "The Household Wreck," to show that De Quincey was a consummate master. The fine paper on "The English Mail Coach," of which we have already spoken, has several passages which show that he had an ear delicately attuned to

"The still sad music of humanity,"

— one of which we cannot forbear quoting. After stating that "the mail-coaches it was that distributed over the face of the land, like the opening of apocalyptic vials, the heart-shaking news of Trafalgar, of Salamanca, of Vittoria, of Waterloo," he proceeds to describe a ride to London in a coach that bore the tidings of a great victory in Spain. At one village where the coach stopped, a poor woman, seeing De Quincey with a newspaper in his hand, came to him. She had a son there in the 23d Dragoons. "My heart sank within me as she made that answer." This regiment, originally three hundred and fifty strong, had made a sublime charge that day, paralyzing a French column six thousand strong, and had come back one in four! De Quincey told her all that he had the heart to tell her of that dearly bought victory, but,—

"I told her *not* of the bloody price that had been paid. I showed her not the funeral banners under which the noble regiment lay sleeping. But I told her how those dear children of England, officers and privates, had

leaped their horses over all obstacles as gayly as hunters to the morning's chase. I told her how they rode their horses into the mists of death, (saying to myself, but not saying to *her*) and laid down their young lives for thee, O mother England! as willingly,—poured out their noble blood as cheerfully,— as ever, after a long day's sport, when infants, they had rested their heads upon their mother's knees, or sunk to sleep in her arms. Strange as it is, she seemed to have no fear of her son's safety. Fear was swallowed up in joy so absolutely that in the mere simplicity of her fervent nature, the poor woman threw her arms round my neck, as she thought of her son, and gave to *me* the kiss which was secretly meant for *him*."

De Quincey is not only a great master of pathos, but his genius for the sublime is equally manifest; it would be hard to name a modern English writer who had a mind more sensitive to emotions of grandeur. One of the most striking peculiarities of his sensuous framework, was his exquisite sensibility to the luxuries and grandeurs of sound. Keenly alive to the pomps and glories of the eye, it was through the ear that he drank in the highest intoxications of sense; and to obtain "a grand debauch" of that nature, there was hardly any sacrifice that he was not willing to make. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that his style is preëminently musical, and that from music he draws many of his aptest and most impressive metaphors.

De Quincey's dialectic skill and ability in handling practical themes are shown in his "Logic of Political Economy," a work in which he defends and illustrates the doctrines of Ricardo, and which drew forth the praise of J. S. Mill. In speaking of his motives for writing this treatise, he says of certain others on the same subject: "I saw that these were generally the very dregs and rinsings of the human intellect; and that any man of sound head, and practised in wielding logic with a scholastic adroitness, might take up the whole academy of modern economists, and throttle them between heaven and earth with his finger and thumb, or bray their fungous heads to powder with a lady's fan."

The great, crowning glory of De Quincey is his style, upon which he bestowed incredible labor,—rewriting some pages of the "Confessions," as he told a friend of ours, not less than sixty times. His style is an almost perfect vehicle of his ideas,—accommodating itself, as it does, with marvellous flexibility, to the highest flights of imagination, to the minutest subtleties of reasoning, and to the wildest freaks of humor,—in short, to all the exigencies of his thought. In his hands our stiff Saxon language becomes almost as ductile as the Greek. Ideas that seem to defy expression,—ideas so subtle, or so vague and elusive, that most thinkers find it difficult to contemplate them at all,—are conveyed on his page with a nicety, a felicity of phrase, that might almost provoke the envy of Shakespeare. It is the most passionately eloquent, the most thoroughly poetical prose, our language has produced, the organ-like variety and grandeur of its cadence affecting the mind as only perfect verse affects it. Grave, stately, and sustained, when expressing solemn and imperial thoughts,—light and carelessly graceful when playing with the theme, it is at once sharp and sweet, flowing and pithy, condensed and expansive; now expressing chapters in a sentence, now amplifying a single thought into pages of rich, glowing, and delightful eloquence. Even Milton, in his best prose, is not a greater master of melody and harmony; and in some of the grandest passages, where the thought and feeling go on swelling and deepening from the first note to the last in a lofty climax, the language of De Quincey can be compared only to the swell and crash of an orchestra.

It is true his style bristles with scholasticisms; but how they tell! You feel, as you read, that here is a man who has gauged the potentiality of every word he uses; who has

analyzed the simples of all his compound phrases. The chief characteristic of his style is elaborate stateliness; his principal figure, personification. Generally his sentences are long; the very opposite of those asthmatic and short-winded ones which he pronounces a defect in French writers; and they are as full of life and joints as a serpent. It was said of Coleridge that no stenographer could do justice to his lectures, because, though he spoke deliberately, yet it was impossible, from the first part of his sentences, even to guess how they would end. Each clause was a new surprise, and the close often as unexpected as a thunderbolt. So with the Opium-Eater; "the great Platonic year," as Hazlitt says of Sir Thomas Browne, "revolves in one of his periods;" or, as De Quincey himself says of Bishop Berkeley, "he passes with the utmost ease and speed from tar-water to the Trinity, from a moleheap to the thrones of the Godhead." Of all the great writers, he is one of the easiest we know of to read aloud. So perfect is the construction of his sentences,—so exquisitely articulated are all their vertebræ and joints,—so musical are his longest periods, even when they accomplish a cometary sweep ere he closes, that the most villainous elocutionist, in reading them, cannot help laying the emphases in the right place.

And yet, with all these wondrous gifts as a writer, De Quincey has one glaring defect, which neutralizes in a great degree the force of his splendid genius,—frustrates all adequate success. Among the fairies who dropped gifts into his cradle, there was one whose gift was a curse. She gave him Irresolution,—the want of coördinating power, of central control, of intellectual volition. It is for this reason that De Quincey, with all his transcendent abilities and immense

learning, has no commanding position in English literature, — exerts little influence on his age, — is the centre of no circle. Unhappily this weakness of will was still further aggravated by opium; and of the Opium-Eater he himself tells us, half sportively, but too truly, that it is a characteristic never to finish anything. To these two causes may be ascribed the abiding deficiency of his writings, — the fact that, with all his genius and learning, he exerts less positive influence than many a man with a tithe of his ability. To foreigners he is hardly known. The one melancholy reflection which his writings suggest is that they are all provokingly fragmentary; he has produced not one complete and connected whole. As his power of conception is logical rather than creative, he analyzes wonderfully, but compounds imperfectly, — is a philosopher rather than a poet. Tantalus-like, he stands up to the chin in learning, but is unable, save by a desperate effort of the will, to lure it to the lip. Over his head hang golden fruits, but only the most convulsive, dexterous grasp rescues them from those gales of nervous distraction which would scatter them to the four winds. Hence his writings, with all their marvellous subtlety and exquisite beauty, are chaotic and indeterminate, — tend to no fixed goal, — are as purposeless as dreams. They are reveries, outpourings, improvisations, — not works. He modulates and weaves together fragments of divinest song; but gives us no symphony. Gleams come upon his page from deep central fires; lights flash across it from distant horizons; but the light is that of a dancing will-o'-the-wisp, not the steady throbbing of a star by which men may shape their course. As Carlyle says of John Stirling's conversation, De Quincey's writings are "beautifullest sheet-lightning, not to be condensed into

thunderbolts." Hence it is that he has charmed, delighted, astonished his age, but failed to *impress* it.

De Quincey himself appears sensible of this vagrancy, this peripatetic instinct of his mind, and calls it an intermitting necessity, affecting his particular system like that of moulting in birds, or that of migration which affects swallows. "Nobody," says he, "is angry with swallows for vagabondizing periodically, and surely I have a better right to indulge therein than a swallow; I take precedency of a swallow in any company whatever." Who, after this naïve and ingenious "confession and avoidance," can have the heart to complain? Prim folks, who cling to the dramatic unities, and all that, and who are shocked by a style that deviates from the reproachless routine of Hugh Blair, D.D., will, no doubt, continue to be scandalized by this dreamer. But those who have drunk inspiration from Richter and deep draughts of wisdom from Montaigne, will forgive De Quincey, too, his vagrancy, for the sake of its erratic pleasantness. As Menzel says of the German rambler: "We would willingly pardon every one his mannerism, if he were but a Jean Paul; and a fault of richness is always better than one of poverty,"—so we may say of the English. Who would have thought to "pull up" Samuel Taylor Coleridge in one of his infinitely parenthetical monologues, because he diverged from the grand trunk line, and hurried you into insulated recesses and sequestered Edens unnoted in the way bill? No man, surely, but a grim utilitarian, reduced to the very lowest denomination.

This very discursiveness and libertinism of intellect,—this tendency to wander from the main channel of his thought,—to steer toward every port but that set down

in the bill of lading,—lent, it must be confessed,—an indescribable charm to De Quincey's conversation as it welled out from those capacious, overflowing cells of thought and memory, which a single word, or hint, or token could agitate. Gilfillan has finely described his small, thin, piercing voice, winding out so distinctly his subtleties of thought and feeling,—his long and strange sentences evolving like a piece of complicated music; and the Ettrick Shepherd, in the "Noctes," addresses him as one having the "voice of a nicht-wanderin' man, laigh and lone, pitched on the key o' a wimblin' burn speakin' to itsel' in the silence, aneath the moon and stars." A gentleman who visited De Quincey in 1854, thus records his impressions of him, after a half hour's conversation: "We have listened to Sir William Hamilton at his own fireside, to Carlyle walking in the parks of London, to Lamartine in the midst of a favored few at his own house, to Cousin at the Sorbonne, and to many others; but never have we heard such sweet music of eloquent speech as then flowed from De Quincey's tongue. Strange light beamed from that grief-worn face, and for a little while that weak body, so long fed upon by pain, seemed to be clothed upon with supernatural youth."

Eloquent as De Quincey was, his conversational powers were at their full height only when he was under the influence of his favorite drug. The best time to hear the lion roar was at four or five o'clock in the morning; then, when recovering from the stupor into which the opium had plunged him, his tongue seemed touched with an eloquence almost divine. It mattered little what was the theme of his high argument; whether beeves or butterflies, St. Basil or Æschylus; upon the grandest or the

most trivial, he would descant in the same *lenem susurrum*,—never losing a certain mellow earnestness, yet never rising into declamation,—in sentences exquisitely jointed, and with the enthusiasm of a mystic, the subtlety of a schoolman, and the diction of a poet. It is a curious fact that, though he was the soul of courtesy, he never for a moment thought of adapting his language to the understanding of his listener. The most illiterate porter, housemaid, or even prowling beggar, he would address on the most trivial themes, with as much pomp of rhetoric, in language as precise and measured, and abounding in as many "long-tailed words in *osity* and *ation*,"—as that in which he would have addressed an Oxford professor on a vexed point in metaphysics, or Porson on a classical emendation. Mrs. Gordon, in her life of Professor Wilson, has given a specimen of the style in which the Opium-Eater was wont to address her father's housekeeper, when directing her how to prepare his food; and did it come from a less trustworthy source, we should take the order as a burlesque or caricature. Wishing his meat cut with the grain, he would say: "Owing to dyspepsia afflicting my system, and the possibility of any additional derangement of the stomach taking place, consequences incalculably distressing would arise,—so much so, indeed, as to increase nervous irritation, and prevent me from attending to matters of overwhelming importance,—if you do not remember to cut the mutton in a diagonal, rather than in a longitudinal form." No wonder that the cook,—a simple Scotchwoman,—stood aghast, exclaiming: "Weel, I never heard the like o' that in a' my days; the body has an awfu' sicht o' words. If it had been my ain master that was wanting his dinner, he would ha' ordered

a hale table-fu' wi' little mair than a waff o' his haun, and here's a' this claver aboot a bit o' mutton nae bigger than a prin. Mr. De Quinshey would make a gran' preacher,—though I'm thinkin' a hantle o' the folks wouldna ken what he was drivin' at."*

Doubtless the description of Praed's vicar, applied to De Quincey, would be no exaggeration:

"His talk is like a stream which runs
With rapid change from rocks to roses;
It slips from politics to puns,
It glides from Mahomet to Moses;
Beginning with the laws which keep
The planets in their radiant courses,
And ending with some precept deep
For skinning eels, or shoeing horses."

In conclusion, we would urge those of our readers, especially our young readers, who are strangers to the Opium-Eater's twenty-four volumes, to read them at their earliest opportunity. If they would make the acquaintance of one of the greatest scholars and thinkers of our century,—of a piercing and imperial intellect, which, in all the great faculties of analysis, combination, and reception, has had few superiors in modern times,—of one of the subtlest yet most sympathetic critics our literature can boast, whether of art, nature, literature, or life,—of a writer who, in an age of scoffing and skepticism, has never sown the seeds of doubt in any human heart,—of a writer who, by the magnetism of his genius, the affluence of his knowledge, his logical acumen, his imaginative wealth, his marvellous word-painting, gives a charm to every theme he touches;—above all, if they

* The account here given of De Quincey's conversation is necessarily a repetition, with some changes, of that given in the author's former book, "The Great Conversers, and Other Essays."

would know the might and majesty, the pomp, the delicacy, and the beauty of our noble English tongue when its winged words are commanded by a master,—we would conjure them to study the writings of De Quincey. Though he has left no great single work to which we can point as a monument of his genius, and his most precious ideas are in the condition of the Sibyl's leaves after they had been scattered by the wind, we may, nevertheless, say in the words of an English reviewer, "that the exquisite finish of his style, with the scholastic rigor of his logic, form a combination which centuries may never reproduce, but which every generation should study, as one of the marvels of English literature."

ROBERT SOUTH.

NO person who is wont to slake his intellectual thirst at "the wells of English undefiled," will soon forget the tingling delight, the exhilaration of mind and spirit, with which he first read the sermons of Robert South, the shrewdest, most caustic, most fiery, and, with the exception of Thomas Fuller, the wittiest of the old English divines. Among the giants of English theology he stands alone. Intellectually and morally, his individuality was strongly marked. To neither Hooker nor Barrow,— to neither Taylor nor Tillotson,— nor, indeed, to any one of his great contemporaries, except in intellectual might, can we compare him. Nature seems to have framed but one such, and then broken the mould. He was a kind of Tory Sydney Smith, yet lacking the genial, sunny disposition, and the humor, of that divine wit and witty divine; and in reading his works, it is difficult to say which is most to be admired, the thorough grasp and exhaustive treatment of the subject, the masterly arrangement of the thoughts, or the vitality, energy and freshness of expression, which have given his sermons a higher place in the library of the scholar than even in that of the theologian or the pulpit orator.

Robert South was the son of an eminent London merchant, and was born in 1633. In 1647 he was admitted a king's scholar at Westminster, under the tuition of the

celebrated Dr. Busby, and, while there, gave indications of that out-and-out Toryism for which he was conspicuous through life by praying for Charles I, by name, while reading the Latin prayers in school on the day of that monarch's execution. In 1651 he entered Christ Church, Oxford, at the same time with John Locke,— the future champion of the divine right of kings in company with the future champion of freedom. At college, he was a zealous student, indefatigable in his efforts to prepare himself for the gladiatorial contests in which he was to measure swords with some of the most adroit masters of theological fence of the time. He graduated in 1655, and only eight years after had so distinguished himself by his learning and eloquence, that he obtained the degree of Doctor of Divinity. In 1660 he was elected public orator to the University, and preached before the king's commissioners his celebrated discourse entitled "The Scribe Instructed," the object of which is to show what are the qualifications of the Christian preacher, and the absurdity and wickedness involved in becoming a preacher of God's word without sufficient ability, knowledge and preparation. Though preached at the early age of twenty-seven, this sermon is one of his most original and vigorous productions, and is characterized throughout by that logical arrangement, strength of thought, and freshness and epigrammatic pungency of style, which distinguish all of his best discourses. The intensity of thought and feeling which burns through this discourse must have stamped South, in the minds of all who heard him, as a preacher of the highest ability,—as a spirit "of the greatest size, and the divinest mettle."

After speaking of the natural abilities of the preacher,

he proceeds to show the importance of perfecting them by study, exercise, and due improvement of the same, and says: "A well radicated habit, in a lively, vegete faculty, is like 'an apple of gold in a picture of silver.' . . . It is not enough to have books, or for a man to have his divinity in his pocket, or upon the shelf; but he must have mastered his notions, till they even incorporate into his mind, so as to be able to produce and wield them upon all occasions; and not, when a difficulty is proposed and a performance enjoined, to say that he will consult such and such authors: for this is not to be a divine, who is rather to be a walking library than a walking index. . . . It is not the oil in the wick, but in the vessel, which must feed the lamp. The former may indeed cause a present blaze, but it is the latter which must give it a lasting light. It is not the spending money a man has in his pocket, but his hoards in the chest, or in the bank, which must make him rich. A dying man has his breath in his nostrils, but to have it in the lungs is that which must preserve life." Of quacks and mountebanks in divinity he proclaims himself the mortal foe, declaring that when Christ says that a scribe must be stocked with "things new and old," he does not mean "that he should have a hoard of old sermons, with a bundle of new opinions," and as for "such mushroom divines generally, who start up so of a sudden, we do not find their success so good as to recommend their practice. Hasty births are seldom long-lived, but never strong." He has a sharp thrust at a class of preachers not altogether extinct in our own day, who so pray that they "do not supplicate, but compliment Almighty God:" and he ridicules others who "lie grovelling on the ground

with a dead and contemptible flatness," passing off "dullness as a mark of regeneration."

Passages of this sermon rise to a high pitch of eloquence, as where he dwells on the duty of the preacher to employ significant speech and expression in enforcing the truths of the gospel. God's word he pronounces a system of the best rhetoric, as well as a body of religion; and Politian, who says that he abstained from reading the Scriptures, for fear they would spoil his style, is declared to be a blockhead as well as an atheist, who has "as little gust for the elegancies of expression as for the sacredness of the matter." As the highest things require the highest expressions, so, South says, we shall find nothing in Scripture so sublime in itself, but it is reached and sometimes overtopped by the sublimity of the expression. The passions, he asserts, have been more powerfully described by the Hebrew than by the heathen poets. "What poetry," he asks, "ever paralleled Solomon in his description of love, as to all the ways, effects, and ecstasies, and tyrannies of that commanding passion? And where do we read such strange risings and fallings, now the faintings and languishings, now the terrors and astonishments of despair, venting themselves in such high amazing strains, as in Ps. lxxvii? Or where did we ever find sorrow flowing forth in such a natural prevailing pathos, as in the lamentations of Jeremy? One would think that every letter was written with a tear, every word was the noise of a breaking heart; that the author was a man compacted of sorrows, disciplined to grief from his infancy,— one who never breathed but in sighs, nor spoke but in a groan."

In his boyhood, South was an admirer of Oliver Crom-

well; but he early became an ardent partisan of the Restoration,— "the very bulldog," one has termed him, "of the civil and ecclesiastical establishment." During the reign of William he rejected all offers of preferment; he was a great admirer of Archbishop Laud, and execrated the Toleration Act, being equally intolerant to indulgences and forbearances, to Papist and Puritan. In 1663, he preached before Charles the Second, on the anniversary of the "murder" of Charles I, his famous sermon, "Pretence of Conscience no Excuse for Rebellion,"— the fiercest and most truculent of his political discourses. The whole vocabulary of scorn is exhausted in this invective for terms in which to denounce the enemies of the late King, who was "causelessly rebelled against," and "barbarously murdered by the worst of men and the most obliged of subjects." This murder, which he pronounces the blackest fact which the sun ever saw since he hid his face upon the crucifixion of our Saviour, was perpetrated by the scum of the nation — that is, by what was then the uppermost and basest part of it. Like Actæon, Charles was torn by a pack of bloodhounds. The difference between being conquered and slain by another king, and being killed by infamous rebels, is the difference between being torn by a lion, and being eat up by vermin. Ask the Puritans what made them murder their lawful sovereign, rob the church, perjure themselves, and extirpate the government, and the constant answer is conscience — conscience — "still this large capacious thing, their *conscience*, which is always of a much larger compass than their understanding." No terms are too scathing for Charles's enemies; Sir Harry Vane is contemptuously termed "that worthy knight who was executed on Tower Hill;" and Milton is "the Latin

advocate, who, like a blind adder, has spit so much venom on the King's person and cause."

We commend this sermon of South to those croakers who are always bewailing the degeneracy of our age, and the fierceness of its religious controversies; who sigh for the good old times when the champions of opposite doctrines addressed each other in the dialect of doves, and disputed in bucolics. It is a common error to suppose that the controversies of the present day are carried on with a violence and bitterness unknown to past centuries, or, at least, to some golden age to which no date is fixed. The truth is, controversialists, like poets, have always been "an irritable race"; and those who doubt the statement have only to look into the ponderous folios which the giants of old hurled at each other, when contending on the battle-fields of thought. To go no further back than Gregory Nazianzen, we find him, when pitted against the Emperor Julian, hurling the most acrid anathemas, and bestowing upon him epithets which "a beggar, in his drink, would not bestow upon his callet." Everybody knows with what fury Martin Luther, the hero of Wittenberg and Worms, waged war upon his theological adversaries,—how he showered down upon them an incessant flood of darts, pointed with cutting wrath, and feathered with scorn. Of the Catholic divines, he says: "The Papists are all asses, and always will remain asses. Put them in whatever sauce you choose, boiled, roasted, baked, fried, skinned, beat, hashed, they are always the same asses." Again: "What a pleasing sight it would be to see the Pope and the Cardinals hanging on one gallows, in exact order, like the seals which dangle from the bulls of the Pope." But even Luther must yield the palm for virulence, not

to say scurrility, to John Calvin. The latter's adversaries are always knaves, lunatics, drunkards, assassins; and sometimes bulls, asses, cats and dogs. But of all the controversialists of ancient or modern times, it would be difficult to name one who, with the same intellectual might, has descended to such low abuse as Milton. One who is conversant with the old bard through his exquisite poetry alone,— whose thoughts of him are identified with the gorgeous imagery of "Paradise Lost," and who thinks of him as wandering where the Muses haunt clear spring, or sunny grove, smit with the love of sacred song,— as the blind old man, equal in fate and renown with blind Thamyris and blind Mæonides,— feeding on thoughts that voluntary move harmonious numbers, as the wakeful bird sings darkling, and, in shadiest covert hid, tunes her nocturnal note,— can hardly credit the fact that he is the same person who, in his prose writing, so out-Herods Herod in blackening and vilifying his opponents. Not content with riddling Salmasius with the "leaden rain and iron hail" of his logic, with tossing his giant adversary round the ring on the horns of his merciless dilemmas, he writes him down a dunce, in capital letters, page after page. Again, at the end of the sublime prose hymn which concludes his work, "Of Reformation in England," he prays that certain of his adversaries, "after a shameful end in this life, (which God grant them,) shall be thrown down eternally into the darkest and deepest gulf of hell, where, under the despiteful control, the trample and spurn, of all the other damned, that in the anguish of their torture shall have no other ease than to exercise a raving and bestial tyranny over them *as their slaves and negroes*, they shall remain in that

plight forever, *the basest, the lowermost, the most dejected, most underfoot and downtrodden vassals of perdition.*" Neither South in his wildest excesses of invective, nor probably any later controversialist, has anything in his writing which approaches to the awful severity of this imprecation.

Again, in the next century we find Rowland Hill calling Charles Wesley "a designing wolf," a man "as unprincipled as a rook, and as silly as a jackdaw," "a miscreant apostate, whose perfection consists in his perfect hatred of all goodness and of all good men." We find Toplady charging Wesley with "low serpentine cunning," "dirty subterfuges," and "mean, malicious impotence," which "degrade the man of parts into a lying sophister, and sink a divine into the level of an oyster-woman." "I would no more enter into a formal controversy with such a scribbler, than I would contend for the wall with a chimney-sweeper." Yet of these fierce controversialists two were authors of hymns which are sung oftener, perhaps, than any others in the language,—Toplady having written "Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me"; and "Jesus, Lover of my Soul," being the production of Charles Wesley.

To return from this digression: in 1662 South preached his sermon on "Man Created in the Image of God," which is unquestionably his masterpiece. In vigor and weight of thought, in comprehensive grasp of the theme, and in pregnant brevity of expression, it has never been surpassed by any production of the British pulpit. The subject of the discourse is the ideal man, whom South daguerreotypes as he supposes him to have been in Paradise. In doing this, he describes what he terms the universal rectitude of all the faculties of the soul, the

understanding, the will, the passions, and affections. Of the understanding he says that "it gave the soul a bright and full view into all things, and was not only a window, but was itself the prospect. Briefly, there is as much difference between the clear representations of the understanding then, and the obscure discoveries that it makes now, as there is between the prospect of a casement and of a keyhole." Again, he says: "We may collect the excellency of the understanding then, by the glorious reminders of it now, and guess at the stateliness of the building by the magnificence of its ruins. Certainly, that must needs have been very glorious, the decays of which are so admirable. He that is comely when old and decrepid, surely was very beautiful when young. An Aristotle was but the rubbish of an Adam, and Athens but the rudiments of paradise." Of the passion of Joy, he says that it was not that which now often usurps the name. "It was not the mere crackling of thorns, or sudden blaze of the spirits, the exultation of a tickled fancy, or a pleased appetite. Joy was then a masculine and a severe thing; the recreation of the judgment, the jubilee of reason. . . . It did not run out in voice, or indecent eruptions, but filled the soul, as God does the universe, silently and without noise. It was refreshing, but composed, like the pleasantness of youth tempered with the gravity of age, or the mirth of a festival managed with the silence of contemplation."

Hardly inferior to the foregoing discourse is the sermon on "The Pleasantness of Wisdom's Ways," which has many of those pithy, epigrammatic sayings, in which all of South's writings abound. "When reason," he says, "by the assistance of grace, has prevailed over and outgrown

the encroachments of sense, the delights of sensuality are to such a one but as a hobby-horse would be to a counsellor of state, or as tasteless as a bundle of hay to a hungry lion." Of the fickleness and fleeting nature of popular applause, he says: "Like lightning, it only flashes upon the face, and is gone, and it is well if it does not hurt the man." The pleasure of the religious man, he declares, "is an easy and a portable pleasure, such a one as he carries about in his bosom, without alarming either the eye or the envy of the world. A man putting all his pleasures into this one, is like a traveller's putting all his goods into one jewel; the value is the same, and the convenience greater." The sermon closes with some characteristic sarcasms upon the austerities of the Romanists: "Pilgrimages, going barefoot, hair-shirts, and whips, with other such gospel artillery, are their only helps to devotion. . . . It seems that, with them, a man sometimes cannot be a penitent, unless he also turns vagabond, and foots it to Jerusalem, or wanders over this or that part of the world to visit the shrine of such or such a pretended saint; thus, that which was Cain's curse, is become their religion." Of self-scourging he concludes that "if men's religion lies no deeper than their skin, it is possible that they may scourge themselves into very great improvements."

In 1663 South was made Prebendary of St. Peter's, Westminster. In 1670 he was installed a canon of Christ Church, Oxford. In 1678 he preached a sermon on "Christ's Promise the Support of his Despised Ministers," which has some sharp thrusts at Jeremy Taylor. Recommending simplicity of speech, he says: "There is a certain majesty in plainness; as the proclamation of a prince never frisks

it in tropes or fine conceits, in numerous and well-turned periods, but commands in sober, natural expressions. A substantial beauty, as it comes out of the hands of nature, needs neither paint nor patch; things never made to adorn, but to cover something that would be hid." He then cites Paul's mode of preaching, and says: "Nothing here of 'the fringes of the North Star;' nothing of 'nature's becoming unnatural;' nothing of the 'down of angels' wings,' or 'the beautiful locks of cherubims;' no starched similitudes introduced with a 'Thus have I seen a cloud rolling in its airy mansion,' and the like. No, these were sublimities above the rise of the apostolic spirit. For the Apostles, poor mortals, were content to take lower steps, and to tell the world in plain terms, that he who believed should be saved, and that he who believed not should be damned. And this was the dialect which pierced the conscience, and made the hearers cry out 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' It tickled not the ear, but sunk into the heart." South's vehement and fiery spirit had but little taste for "the process of smoothness and delight" by which the Spenser of theology would have lured men into heaven. To his masculine understanding the diffuse, sensuous, and somewhat effeminate over-richness of Taylor's writings was particularly distasteful; and the conceits, quaint similes, unexpected analogies, and gaudy flowers of rhetoric, which he scattered in thick profusion throughout sermons on the grandest and most solemn themes, were as offensive and incongruous as would be the placing of the frippery fountains, and clipped yews, and trim parterres of Versailles among the glaciers and precipices of the Alps.

In 1681 South preached before the king at Westminster his sermon on "All Contingencies Directed by God's Providence." In this occurs the famous hit at that "bankrupt, beggarly fellow, Cromwell," who is represented as "first entering the Parliament House with a threadbare, torn cloak, and a greasy hat, and perhaps neither of them paid for,"—a gibe which so tickled Charles that he laughed heartily, and said to Rochester, "Odsfish! Lory, your chaplain must be a bishop; therefore, put me in mind of him at the next death." But South was no place-hunter; it was no sycophantic motive that prompted his sarcasm at the Protector, or led him to champion the king or the church. During the reigns of both Charles and James he steadily refused a bishopric. Though he disliked James's measures regarding the Catholics, his loyalty never wavered; and after the Prince of Orange ascended the throne, it was some time before he acknowledged the legality of the revolution settlement. When offered one of the sees vacated by the non-juring bishops, he declined, saying "he blessed God he was neither so ambitious, nor in want of preferment, as, for the sake of it, to build his rise upon the ruin of any one father of the church."

During the last years of his life he suffered from painful and irritating ailments, yet they did not extinguish his sprightliness and vivacity, nor did his wit lose any of its keenness. In 1709 his infirmities were so great that the eyes of eager expectants were turned to him, in hopes of a speedy vacancy in his prebend's stall and rectory. There is a characteristic letter to Halifax from Swift, who coveted the place, and was impatient at South's tenacity of life, in which he writes: "Pray, my lord, desire Dr. South to die

about the fall of the leaf, for he has a prebend of Westminster, which will make me your neighbor;" to which Halifax replies, October 6, 1709, "Dr. South holds out still, but he cannot be immortal." The infirm old man lingered, however, seven years longer, outliving Halifax himself, and ended his laborious life on the 8th of July, 1716, at the age of eighty-three.

The life and writings of South show that he was a man of powerful intellect, a worthy compeer of Hooker, Barrow, and Taylor,—in short, one of the giants of English theology. While his writings have not the depth and suggestiveness of Hooker's, nor that mighty and sustained power controlled by the severest logic, that peculiar quality of mastery and vigor to which all tasks appear equally easy, which we find in Barrow, and while we miss in his page the imaginative fancies, the exquisite and subtle harmony which delight us in the sweet poet of theology, we find in South's works a vigorous and sterling sense, a sharp and piercing wit, and a terseness, vitality, and freshness of expression which are surpassed in no other English discourses. To a large and acute understanding, he united a frank and courageous nature, and what he believed and felt he never feared to utter. Nice, squeamish persons, who dislike to hear ugly things called by ugly names, and prefer dainty, mincing terms, weighed in a hair-balance of propriety and good breeding, to the blunt and homely language in which honest indignation is wont to vent itself, will not relish his Spartan plainness of speech. They would have liked him better had he sought what an old poet calls

> "Modest, close-couched terms
> Cleanly to gird our looser libertines."

But whatever other faults may be laid to his charge, he

was evidently no flincher, no trimmer; he was not "pigeon-livered, or lacking gall." Vice he never feared to denounce, in high places or low, nor did he hesitate to declare the whole counsel of God to an unprincipled monarch and a dissolute court, whom his theories of political government led him to look up to with feelings of reverence. Tory as he was, there are passages in his sermons which must have made the cheeks of Charles and his sycophants tingle. A warm friend and an outspoken enemy, he had no reserves nor disguises, and always championed his principles *à l'outrance*. Wherever his sword fell, it always fell with the whole vigor of his arm, and he was satisfied with nothing less than cleaving his opponent from crown to chin. He never stopped to consider what expression would be most politic, or to hunt up dainty, holiday terms by which to characterize an opponent. No one can doubt that he would have fought, if necessary, with the same spirit that he wrote; and, indeed, during Monmouth's rebellion, he declared he was ready, if there should be occasion, to change his black gown for a buff coat. That he was a bigot in politics and religion, who could brook no dissent from his own rooted and ultra opinions, is too true; but this fault becomes almost a virtue when contrasted with the opposite vices of cringing servility, hypocrisy, and cant, which at the Restoration were almost universal.

South's writings are a storehouse of vehement expression, such as can be found in no other English writer. He had at his command the whole vocabulary of abuse, satire, and scorn, and, when his ire was aroused, he was never niggard of the treasures of his indignant rhetoric. Words were the only weapons which his sacred calling allowed him to use; but words, as he employed them, were sharper

than "drawn swords." Radical editors should study his writings day and night; nowhere else (except in Milton) will they find such biting words and stinging phrases with which to denounce wicked men, wicked institutions, and wicked practices. The intensity of thought and feeling which burns through his writings has hardly any parallel in English literature. It has been compared to the unwearied fire of the epic poet. There are times when he seems to wrestle with his subject, as if he would grind it into powder; and when he seems to say all that he does say to us, only that we may conjecture how much more he could say if he were able to wreak his thoughts upon expression. It has been truly said that many sentences in his works appear torn from his brain by main strength, expressing not only the thought he intended to convey, but a kind of impatient rage that it did not come with less labor. With all his command of language, he seems often to struggle with it in order to wrest from it words enough for his wealth of thought. He wrote doubtless from his own consciousness when he represented study as racking the inward and destroying the outward man,—as clothing the soul with the spoils of the body,—and as that which, "like a stronger blast of lightning, not only melts the sword, but consumes the scabbard."

His sermons on "Extempore Prayer," "Covetousness," "Education," "The Fatal Imposture and Force of Words," "Shamelessness in Sin," and "Prosperity ever Dangerous to Virtue," are masterpieces of their kind, full of of striking thoughts that root themselves in the memory of every thoughtful reader. It would be difficult to find in any other sermons so many aphorisms and maxims having a direct bearing on life and duty,—so many terse

sayings which are true, though not obvious, or moral reflections sharpened into epigrams. "When Providence," he says, "designs strange and mighty changes, it gives men wings instead of legs; and instead of climbing leisurely, makes them fly at once to the top and height of greatness and power." Of ingratitude he says that it is "too base to return a kindness, and too proud to regard it; much like the tops of the mountains, barren indeed, but yet lofty; they produce nothing; they feed nobody; they clothe nobody; yet are high and stately, and look down upon all the world about them."

Again, he speaks of the politician as "treating gratitude as a worse kind of witchcraft, which only serves to conjure up the pale, meagre ghosts of dead and forgotten kindnesses to haunt and trouble him." Of prayer he says: "Know that the lower thou fallest, the higher will thy prayer rebound." Again he observes: "God does not command us to set off our prayers with dress and artifice, to flourish it in trope and metaphor, and to beg our daily bread in blank verse, or to show anything of the poet in our devotions but indigence and want. . . . Does not he present his Maker not only with a more decent, but also more free and liberal oblation, who tenders Him much in little, and brings Him his whole heart and soul wrapped up in three or four words, than he who, with full mouth and loud lungs, sends up whole vollies of articulate breath to the throne of grace? No doubt God accounts and accepts of the former as infinitely a more valuable offering than the latter; as that subject pays his prince a much nobler and more acceptable tribute who tenders him a purse of gold than he who brings him a whole cart-load of farthings,—in which there is weight without worth, and number with-

out account." Again he observes on the same subject: "It is not length, nor copiousness of language, that is devotion, any more than bulk and bigness is valor, or flesh the measure of the spirit. *A short sentence may oftentimes be a large and a mighty prayer.* Devotion so managed is like water in a well, where you have fullness in a little compass; which surely is much nobler than the same carried out into many little petit, creeping rivulets, with length and shallowness together."

South's style is more modern than that of any other divine of his century. It is fervid, forcible, and flexible, often rhythmic, never obscure; and readily adapts itself to all the demands of his thought.

William Cobbett, who, we fear, did not "reck his own rede," says: "A man, as he writes on a sheet of paper a word or a sentence, ought to bear in mind that he is writing something which may, for good or evil, live forever." How much more momentous is the same thought as expressed by South,—"He who has published an ill book must know that his guilt and his life determine not together; no, such an one, as the Apostle saith, 'Being dead, yet speaketh'; he sins in his very grave, corrupts others while he is rotting himself, and has a growing account in the other world after he has paid Nature's last debt in this; and, in a word, quits this life like a man carried off by the plague, who, though he dies himself, does execution upon others by a surviving infliction."

Speaking of the dependence of the intellectual man upon the physical, he observes that while the soul is a sojourner in the body, "it must be content to submit its own quickness and spirituality to the dullness of its vehicle, and to comply with the pace of its inferior

companion,—just like a man shut up in a coach, who, while he is so, must be willing to go no faster than the motion of the coach will carry him." In denouncing intemperance, he pithily says: "He who makes his belly his business, will quickly come to have a conscience of as large a swallow as his throat." In a sermon on education, he satirizes some schoolmasters as executioners rather than instructors of youth, and says that "stripes and blows are fit only to be used on those who carry their brains in their backs." Pride he declares to have been "the devil's sin and the devil's ruin, and has been, ever since, the devil's stratagem; who, like an expert wrestler, usually gives a man a lift before he gives him a throw." Of misrepresentation he forcibly says: "It is this which revives and imitates that inhuman barbarity of the old heathen persecutors, wrapping up Christians in the skins of wild beasts, that so they might be worried and torn in pieces by dogs. Do but paint an angel black, and that is enough to make him pass for a devil." To be angry under the dispensations of Providence he pronounces the height of folly, as well as wickedness. "A man so behaving himself is nothing else but weakness and nakedness setting itself in battle array against Omnipotence; a handful of dust and ashes sending a challenge to the host of heaven. For what else are words and talk against thunderbolts; and the weak, empty noise of a querulous rage against him who can speak worlds, who could word heaven and earth out of nothing, and can, when he pleases, word them into nothing again?" One of his most vivid and striking images, conveyed with a Miltonian roll and grandeur of expression, illustrates the seeming strength which a revengeful spirit acquires from

resistance. "As a storm could not be so hurtful, were it not for the opposition of trees and houses, it ruins nowhere but where it is withstood and repelled. It has, indeed, the same force when it passes over the rush or the yielding osier; but it does not roar or become dreadful till it grapples with the oak, and rattles upon the tops of the cedars." Denouncing ignorance in public men, he says: "A blind man sitting in the chimney corner is pardonable enough, but sitting at the helm, he is intolerable. If owls will not be hooted at, let them keep close within the tree, and not perch upon the upper boughs." These pithy and pointed sayings are not rare and occasional gems that gleam on us at long intervals in South's writings, and reward us only after we have sifted heaps of verbiage, but sparkle on every page,—we had almost said in every paragraph.

South had a keen insight of human nature. He had thoroughly anatomized the human heart, and laid bare its complex web of motives; and hence there is no "pleasant vice," no self-gratulating hypocrisy, no evasion of duty under a complacent admission of its claims, no self-cheating delusion, no sham sentiment, that hides its true character from his searching glance. He "strips vice and folly of their frippery, scatters the delusions of pride and passion, and lays down the rule of Christian faith and practice with a precision which satisfies the intellect, while it leaves the transgressor without an excuse."

South never juggles nor coquets with words: he has no verbal prudery; and hence he excels in expressive coarseness of language, or felicities of vulgar metaphor: as when he speaks of "that numerous litter of strange,

senseless, absurd opinions, that crawl about the world, to the disgrace of reason"; or says of the pleasures of the eating man and the thinking man, that they are "as different as the silence of Archimedes in the study of a problem, and the stillness of a sow at her wash." Again, wishing to show that pleasure is merely a relative term, that what is such to one being may be pain to another, he says: "The pleasures of an angel can never be the pleasures of a hog." Provided he can make his meaning clear, he never troubles himself about the niceties, elegancies, and refinements of expression; and his strongest terms are often what an old dramatist calls "plain, naked words, stript of their shirts."

It is by their wit that the sermons of South are chiefly known, and against no class of persons is it more frequently or more mercilessly directed than against the Puritans, whose "heavenly hummings and hawings," as well as their "blessed breathings," he never tires of ridiculing. Regarding the Church of England royalists as "the best Christians and the most meritorious subjects in the world," it is not strange that he delighted to satirize the sectarians with whom the country was overrun,—the preachers of the tub and the barn,—who denied the divine right of kings, declared that men should "be able to make a pulpit before they preached in it," and held, as he believed, all human learning in contempt. Gifted with a razor-like wit, and exquisitely sensitive to the comic and the grotesque, he dwelt with delight on their meagre, mortified faces, their droning and snuffling whine, their sanctimonious look and demeanor; and with a proud consciousness of superior bearing, and a somewhat pharisaical conceit of superior integrity — with

the keenest sarcasm and the most undisguised contempt, — held up to the scorn of mankind those whom he deemed impudent pretenders to the gifts of the Spirit. That in his perpetual gibing at rebels and schismatics, he sometimes trembles on the verge of buffoonery,— that his wit and humor, even on more sacred themes, often border on grossness and indelicacy,— cannot be denied. South knew the truth of Horace's maxim:

"Ridiculo acri
Fortius et melius magnas plerumque secatis."

But just as he begins to disgust us by his coarseness, he almost invariably recovers himself by some stroke of vigorous sense and language; and his excuse is to be found in the fact that he lived in an age of sinners whose rhinoceros skin of impudence was not penetrable by nice, mincing phrases, but needed to be lashed with a whip of scorpions, or branded with the hot iron.

A few specimens of South's wit are all that we shall have space to give. Of Popery and Puritanism, which in his opinion were one, he says: "They were as truly brothers as Romulus and Remus. They sucked their principles from the same wolf." Sometimes he despatches the Puritans with the short dagger of a single phrase, as where he terms them "those seraphic pretenders," or speaks of "this apocalyptic ignoramus." Of the greatness and lustre of the Romish clergy, he says: "We envy them neither their scarlet gowns, nor their scarlet sins." In allusion to the many persons who in his time rushed into the ministry without serving an apprenticeship, he observes that "matters have been brought to this pass, that if a man amongst his sons had any blind or disfigured, he laid him aside for the ministry; and such a one was pres-

ently approved, as having a *mortified countenance.*" Of the perversity of the Israelites, he observes that "God seems to have espoused them to Himself upon the very same account that Socrates espoused Xantippe, only for her extreme ill conditions, as the fittest argument both to exercise and to declare His admirable patience to the world." Speaking of the paradoxes maintained by the Greek sophists, he declares: "Such a stupidity or wantonness had seized upon the most raised wits, that it might be doubted whether the philosophers or the owls of Athens were the quicker sighted." Ridiculing the idolatry of the Egyptians, he asks: "Is it not strange that a rational man should worship an ox, nay, the image of an ox? fawn upon his dog? bow himself before a cat? adore leeks and garlic, and shed penitential tears at the smell of a deified onion? Yet so did the Egyptians, once the famed masters of all arts and learning." Again, quoting Isaiah xliv, 14, "A man hews him down a tree in the wood, and a part of it he burns," and in verses 16, 17, "with the residue thereof he maketh a god," South thus comments: "With the one part he furnishes his chimney, with the other his chapel. A strange thing, that the fire must first consume this part, and then burn incense to that. As if there was more divinity in one end of the stick, than in the other; or as if it could be graved and painted omnipotent, or the nails and the hammer could give it an apotheosis." Of sensualists, he says: "Saying grace is no part of their meal; they feed and grovel like swine under an oak, filling themselves with the mast, but never so much as looking up, either to the boughs that bore, or the hands that shook it down."

Henry Ward Beecher declares that in his younger

days he was a great reader of the old sermonizers. "I read old Robert South through and through. I saturated myself with South. I formed much of my style, and of my handling of texts on his methods." Let the rising generation of preachers follow this example, and if there is not less complaint of the lack of freshness, force, and energy in the pulpit, we are sure the complaint will cease to be well founded.

CHARLES H. SPURGEON.

"WHO has not seen Naples, has seen nothing," say the Italians; who has not heard Mr. Spurgeon, has not heard the greatest of living preachers, will say hundreds, not only of Englishmen, but of Americans, who have listened to the burning words of a Beecher, a Liddon, a Punshon, or a Hall. To visit London without seeing the Metropolitan Tabernacle and its preacher, would be like visiting Rome without seeing St. Peter's, or making the tour of America without beholding Niagara. For this reason and a mixture of others, we left our hotel on a fine Sabbath morning,—the 6th of August, 1871,—and, mounting an omnibus bound for "The Elephant and Castle," were soon on the Surrey side of the Thames, and presently at our point of destination. The Tabernacle, so noted among churches, we found to be a plain, but massive church of brick, adorned with Corinthian pillars, standing back from the street, and inclosed with an iron fence. Although the gate to the inclosure was not yet open, a crowd of persons had already collected, half an hour before the service began, waiting impatiently for admission. Upon stating that we were an American, a ticket of admission was at once handed to us, and we entered the building just as it was beginning to fill. Glancing around, we were struck with the resemblance of the vast audience-room to that of a large theatre. At the farther end is a stage-like platform, with a moveable table on castors and a few chairs;

and just below it, five or six feet above the main floor, there is an orchestra-like inclosure, filled with a large number of bright-looking and neatly-dressed boys. Running round the church are three galleries, one above another,—the whole forming one of the best arrangements for seeing and hearing that could be contrived. Seating ourselves in the lower gallery, at just the right distance from the speaker, we had an excellent opportunity both to see and listen. The regular congregation having been seated, the doors were thrown open to the crowd, when a mighty tide of human beings surged into the aisles, filling every standing-place, sitting-place, nook and corner of the building, till it seemed impossible for another man or child to squeeze himself in. Never have we seen an audience more densely packed,—not even when Jenny Lind sang the first night at Tremont Temple in Boston, of the rapt attention of the dense throng on which occasion this strongly reminded us. Even in the uppermost gallery, which is a good way toward heaven, many persons were standing for lack of seats.

The house filled, Mr. Spurgeon at once steps from a back door upon the platform, followed by the elders of the church, who sit just behind him. In his physiognomy and general appearance, there is little to give assurance of a great orator. Short, stout, and muscular, with a somewhat square face, small, sparkling eyes, a well-formed nose, a mouth shaded by a black moustache, and a general air of frankness, straightforwardness, and honesty, he is a good type of the Anglo-Saxon, and no one could possibly mistake him for a native of any other country. Natural, decided, and impressive in his manner, full of force and fire, and speaking in a loud, bell-like voice, at once clear in its

articulations and pleasant in its tones, he rivets your attention at the start, though precisely what is the secret of his hold upon you, you are puzzled to tell. He begins the service with prayer; and a prayer it is, a real outpouring of the heart to God, not an oration before the Almighty, or an eloquent soliloquy. He is evidently not one of those preachers who, as South says, "so pray that they do not supplicate, but compliment Almighty God"; he believes, with the same divine, that it is not necessary to beg our bread in blank verse, or to show anything of the poet in our devotions but indigence and want. After the prayer comes the hymn, read in a clear, impressive voice; and without any accompaniment, either of organ or bass-viol, the vast assembly of six thousand or seven thousand sound forth the notes of praise. After the first verse has been sung, Mr. Spurgeon singing with his people, a second verse is read and sung, then another verse, till the entire hymn is gone through with. Before worshipping at the Tabernacle, we had heard the fine music at the royal chapel at Whitehall, and listened with ravished ears to the echoing strains of the trained and gowned singers in St. Paul's, and to the pealing organ as it swelled the note of praise in "the long-drawn aisles and fretted vaults" of Westminster Abbey; but we were more deeply moved by this simple praise,—this grand, though inartistic song of joy,—welling up from these Christian hearts, than by the most gorgeous music that ever in minster or cathedral had essayed to

> "Dissolve us into ecstasies,
> And bring all Heaven before our eyes."

A lesson from the Scriptures is next read, accompanied with a pithy and suggestive running commentary, and the people throughout the house open their Bibles, and follow

the pastor in the reading. Another hymn is given out and sung as before; and then comes the sermon. Though fifty or sixty minutes long, it is listened to throughout with the profoundest interest, no one, not even of the listeners who are standing, showing any signs of weariness. The text is 1 Corinthians vi, 19, 20: "Ye are not your own; for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's." The subject is considered under three heads: I, The blessed fact, "Ye are bought with a price"; II, The plain consequence arising from this fact, namely, that, 1, It is clear as a *negative*, that "Ye are not your own"; and, 2, It is clear as a *positive*, that "your body and spirit are God's." III, The natural conclusion, "Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit."

Under the second head the speaker observes: "It is a great privilege not to be one's own. A vessel is drifting on the Atlantic hither and thither, and its end no man knoweth. It is derelict, deserted by all its crew; it is the property of no man; it is the prey of every storm, and the sport of every wind; rocks, quicksands, and shoals wait to destroy it; the ocean yearns to engulf it. It drifts onward to no man's land, and no man will mourn its shipwreck. But mark well yonder bark of the Thames, which its owner surveys with pleasure. In its attempt to reach the sea it may run ashore, or come into collision with other vessels, or in a thousand ways suffer damage; but there is no fear, it will pass through the floating forest of 'the Pool'; it will thread the winding channel, and reach the Nore, because the owner will secure it pilotage, skillful and apt. How thankful you and I should be that we are not derelict to-day! We are not our own, not left on the wild waste

of chance to be tossed to and fro by fortuitous circumstances, but there is a hand upon the helm; we have on board a pilot who owns us, and will surely steer us into the Fair Havens of eternal rest." Under the third head, Mr. Spurgeon says: "Our bodies used to work hard enough for the devil; now they belong to God, we will make them work for Him. Your legs used to carry you to the theatre; be not too lazy to come out on a Thursday night to the house of God. Your eyes have often been open on iniquity; keep them open during the sermon, do not drop asleep! Your ears have been sharp enough to catch the words of a lascivious song; let them be quick to observe the word of God. Those hands have often squandered your earnings in sinfulness; let them give freely to the cause of Christ. Your body was a willing horse when it was in the service of the devil; let it not be a sluggish hack now that it draws the chariot of Christ."

Again: "If you were to go to a cattle-show, and it were said, 'Such and such a bullock belongs to Her Majesty,' it may be that it is no better than another, but it would be of interest to thousands as belonging to royalty. See here, then, such and such a man belongs to God; what manner of person ought he to be? If there be any one in this world who will not be criticised, depend upon it, Christian, it is not the Christian; sharp eyes will be upon him, and worldly men will find faults in him which they would not see if he were not a professor. For my part, I am very glad of the lynx eyes of the worldlings. Let them watch, if they will. I have heard of one who was a great caviller at Christian people, and after having annoyed a church a long time, he was about to leave, and, therefore, as a parting jest with the minister, he said, 'I have no doubt you

will be very glad to know that I am going a hundred miles away!' 'No,' said the pastor, 'I shall be sorry to lose you.' 'How? I never did you any good.' 'I don't know that, for I am sure that never one of my flock put half a foot through the hedge but what you began to yelp at him, and so you have been a famous sheep-dog for me.' I am glad the world observes us. It has a right to do so. If a man says 'I am God's,' he sets himself up for public observation. Ye are lights in the world, and what are lights intended for but to be looked at? A city set on a hill cannot be hid."

These passages, torn from the context, give but a faint idea of the sermon as a whole, which was a masterpiece of its kind, and in many respects peculiar and original. After service, we had a pleasant interview with the preacher, whom we found lying on a sofa in a back room, quite exhausted by his effort. He had but just recovered from a severe sickness, this being his second sermon since he left his bed. It is well known that his exhausting labors and burning enthusiasm have begun to tell upon his physical constitution. The sword has proved too sharp for even the stout scabbard. Ten years ago preaching was almost as easy to him as singing to a bird. To electrify, convince, and persuade audiences was a labor of love. Now every Sunday's efforts cost him forty-eight hours' pain. During our interview a gentleman said to him that an American preacher who had heard the sermon observed at its close, "*That* discourse was composed in this house." "Did he say so?" exclaimed Mr. Spurgeon. "That is remarkable. The text was given to me by one of my deacons, who died yesterday, and requested in his last moments that I would preach from

it. At six this morning I sat down to think out the discourse. I spent an hour upon the text, and could make nothing of it. I never could preach from other people's texts. I said this, in my despair, to my wife, who told me to try again. I tried again with the same result. 'Well,' said Mrs. S., 'go into the pulpit, and the sermon will come to you.' I followed the advice, and you know the result." In this case Mr. Spurgeon must have spent more time than usual in preparation, for it is said that he commonly devotes but a half hour to this purpose. Only the heads of the sermon are put on paper; all the rest is left to the pulpit. "If I had a month given me to prepare a sermon," he once said to a visitor, "I would spend thirty days and twenty-three hours in something else, and in the last hour I would make the sermon." When asked by the same person if he had ever written a discourse, he replied, "I would rather be hanged."

Yet if Mr. S. spends but little time in immediate preparation, he spends a vast deal of time in general preparation, for the pulpit. No preacher has drunk deeper draughts from the old English divines, or saturated his mind more thoroughly with the spirit of God's word. By these means he has become "a Leyden jar, charged to a plenum," in Horace Mann's phrase, and, the moment he comes in contact with his people, gives forth the electric fire. In our conversation with him, we observed that we would not call the sermon eloquent; it was something far better than eloquence. "Oh, no," was the reply, "I have no pretension to that sort of thing. I love to *hear* eloquent men, you know, as well as anybody, but if *I* should attempt oratory, I should be sure

to fail." In the same spirit he lately prefaced a lecture by saying that he had never yet succeeded in the art of lecturing, and added, "If any of you have ever seen a goose trying to fly, you may say, 'That's like Mr. Spurgeon trying to lecture.'" It is reported that a noted fanatic and bore once called to see him, and, being asked by a deacon what name he should announce to Mr. S., replied, "Say that a servant of the Lord wants to see him." "Tell him," was the preacher's reply, "that I am engaged with his Master." Being asked whether this anecdote was apocryphal, he smilingly admitted its truth. Mr. Spurgeon has a good deal of mother wit, and even when preaching drops from time to time a shrewd, pungent remark, or indulges in an apt, vivid pictorial illustration, that causes the sea of upturned faces to ripple with a smile. In a recent speech in Surrey, at the laying of the foundation stone of a new chapel, he said no money was to be placed in the cavity of the stone, for he could not see the use of burying money, and, moreover, he had known memorial stones to move suddenly during the night when money had been placed in them. He once heard a man say, "If you want to touch my purse, you must touch my heart," to which he (Mr. S.) replied, "I believe you, because there is where you keep your heart." Another man once said to him: "I thought you preached for souls, and not for money"; and he replied: "So we do, but we can't live upon souls, and if we could, it would take a large number such as yours to make a single breakfast." At a recent laying of the corner-stone of a chapel, he told the people how he contrived to secure pure air in a church where the windows were so rarely opened that it was found difficult to raise

them. "It was so close and hot," he said, "that I asked every gentleman near a window to smash a pane or two. There was soon a very grand smash, but then the beautiful fresh air streamed in. I paid the bill afterwards like an honest man; but it was much better to do that than bear the cruelty of preaching in such an atmosphere, or forcing people to listen when they were more disposed to sleep."

What is the secret of Mr. Spurgeon's power as a preacher? That he is the greatest of living European preachers, if not the first in the world, few will doubt. For twenty years men have gathered in crowds to hear him. Audiences varying from 5,000 to 9,000 have constantly filled the houses where he has preached; men of all classes have hung upon his lips; and yet, though the "fiery soul has o'erinformed" the physical frame, and he speaks almost always with some pain, there is no flagging, no symptom of abatement in the eagerness with which men listen. You must still go early to secure a seat in the Tabernacle. His church numbers some 4,300 members. He has published over a thousand sermons. More than *twenty millions* of his discourses have been circulated in the English language, and they have been translated into all the languages of Christendom, besides being translated to some extent into remote heathen tongues. There was a time when it was fashionable to speak of him as "vulgar," and as being a cometary genius, whose splendor would be short-lived. But now even fashionable people feel compelled to hear him, and scholars, barristers, members of parliament, and peers of the realm acknowledge his power. How shall we account for this? Is there anything in his *person* to solve the mystery? There

have been orators who almost by the magnetism of their presence have held their hearers spell-bound. Their lofty and commanding forms, their god-like foreheads, flashing eyes, and general port and bearing, have given weight and electric force to their words. Such was the case with Whitefield, Irving, Chalmers, and other great pulpit orators, who impressed men by their looks as well as by their utterances. But Spurgeon has nothing of this sort to magnetize men or chain their attention. There is no necromancy in his face or figure. Short and chubby in figure, with a round, homely, honest face, though with an expressive eye, he is Saxon *intus et in cute;* and though you might credit him with strength of will and iron endurance, you would not from his features infer great intellectual power or ability to sway the hearts of men.

Is it his *culture* that gives Mr. Spurgeon his sway over men? Unquestionably he has done much to remedy his lack of intellectual equipment since he began to storm the hearts of his hearers. He has drunk deep, ox-like draughts from the Scriptures and from the old Puritan divines. He has spent not a little time, we have been told, in the study of Greek and Latin, and has enriched his vocabulary with words drawn from the pure "wells of English undefiled." He has made incursions, too, into the broad domains of science, not merely for recreation, or to gratify his intellectual curiosity, but for the more definite purpose of supplying his mind with new images and analogies. According to a statement in the London "World," he has not only given attention to astronomy, chemistry, zoology, ornithology, etc., but field-sports, also, have helped to enrich his fund of illustration. It is not uncommon, we are told, to find him engaged

busily over a pile of technical books on fox-hunting or salmon-fishing, deer-stalking or grouse-shooting. He is a strong believer in the theory of ventilating the mind,—of pouring a stream of new ideas constantly through it,—to preserve its freshness, and prevent the stagnation not unfrequently brought about in a strong intellect engrossed in one pursuit. All this explains the fresh and breezy vigor of his preaching, and shows why, in his thousands of sermons, he so rarely repeats himself. But, it must be remembered, he did not begin his career with the advantage of a liberal education. It is doubtful, too, whether, in early life, he had either the taste, the appliances, or the leisure for the scientific and literary excursions he now makes. He is not a scholar, nor a trained theologian, still less one of those bookish men in whom the receptive faculty absorbs the generative, and the scholarhood sucks up the manhood; nor is there reason to suppose that, by any amount of application, he could become

> "A second Thomas, or at once,
> To name them all, another Duns."

Does Mr. Spurgeon's *voice* account for his success? That the quality of the voice has much to do with success in oratory, none can doubt. Cicero held that, "for the effectiveness and glory of delivery, the voice, doubtless, holds the first place." There are voices that electrify, voices that melt, and voices that appal. It is said that Chatham's lowest whisper was distinctly audible; his middle tone was sweet, rich, and beautifully varied; and when he raised his voice to its high pitch, the house was completely filled with the volume of sound, and the effect was awful, except when he wished to cheer and animate,

and then he had a spirit-stirring note which was perfectly irresistible. Henry Clay's voice had a similar flexibility. Soaring with the grand and descending with the pathetic, it had a marvellous compass, and its trumpet blasts were not more audible or thrilling than its veriest whisper. Burke's voice, on the other hand, was a loud cry, which tended, even more than the formality of his discourses, to send the M. P.'s to their dinners. Mr. Spurgeon's voice, marvellous as it is, has little flexibility or compass. It has a loud, bell-like ring, but is a comparatively level voice, with little variety in its modulations, though very pleasing in its tones. Rarely rising to a trumpet tone, it never descends to the lowest notes, and, above all other qualities, it is remarkable for distinctness and force. Were his voice, however, ten times more impressive than it is, and as "musical as Apollo's lute," it would not alone account for his success, for it might be *vox et preterea nihil*, which surely would soon lose its charm.

The real sources of Mr. Spurgeon's power we believe to be his *elocution*, his *style*, and the *earnestness* that grows out of a profound conviction of the truth of what he teaches. His delivery, though not of the very highest order, is wonderfully natural and impressive. There is no stiffness or affectation in it. He talks, in a free, off-hand way, just as a man would talk with his friend. Even when most impassioned, he speaks in colloquial tones, never for a moment falling into what the old Scotch woman, rebuking her son as he read the newspaper, called "the Bible twang." Again, his language is as simple and unaffected as his manner. It is chiefly plain, nervous, idiomatic Saxon; the vocabulary, not of books, but of the market-place and the fireside,—"not of

the university, but of the universe." "The devil," he once said, "does not care for your dialectics, and eclectic homiletics, or Germanic objectives and subjectives; but pelt him with Anglo-Saxon in the name of God, and he will shift his quarters." Mr. Spurgeon's style, like that of every great speaker, is individual and original,—the outgrowth and exponent of his whole mental character. It is plain, straightforward, luminously transparent,—a perfect mirror of the thought. His winged words have a force and significance which they do not bear in the dictionary, and hasten to their mark with the precision, rapidity, and directness of an arrow. No shade of doubt weakens the dogmatic decisiveness of the idea; no momentary hesitation checks or turns aside the sure and sweeping current of the expression. He has no meaningless expletives to pad out his sentences; but everywhere the mind of the speaker is felt beating and burning beneath his language, stamping every word with the image of a thought.

Besides these peculiarities of Mr. Spurgeon's style, it is remarkable also for its pictorial power. Few pulpit-orators abound more in illustrations,—especially homely, yet vivid, illustrations drawn from the fireside, the street, the market, the scenes of daily life. Piety with him is not a thing of abstraction, but something visible, in concrete form. "If I am a Christian," he said, in the sermon we heard, "I have no right to be idle. I saw the other day men using picks in the road in laying down new gas-pipes; they had been resting, and, just as I passed, the clock struck one, and the foreman gave a signal. I think he said, '*Blow up;*' and straightway each man took his pick or his shovel, and they were all at it in earnest.

Close to them stood a fellow with a pipe in his mouth, who did not join in the work, but stood in a free and easy posture. It did not make any difference to him whether it was one o'clock or six. Why not? Because he was his own; the other men were the master's for the time being. If any of you idle professors can really prove that you belong to yourselves, I have nothing more to say to you; but if you profess to have a share in the redeeming sacrifice of Christ, I am ashamed of you if you do not go to work the very moment the signal is given." Again, take the following: "The world has a right to expect more from the Christian than from anybody else. Stand in fancy in one of the fights of the old civil war. The Royalists are fighting desperately and are winning apace, but I hear a cry from the other side that Cromwell's Ironsides are coming. Now we shall see some fighting. Oliver and his men are lions. But lo! I see that the fellows who come up hang fire, and are afraid to rush into the thick of the fight; surely, these are not Cromwell's Ironsides, and yonder Captain is not old Noll? I do not believe it; it cannot be. Why, if they were what they profess to be, they would have broken the ranks of those perfumed cavaliers long ago, and made them fly before them like chaff before the wind. So when I hear men say, 'Here is a body of Christians.' What! Those Christians? Those cowardly people who hardly dare speak a word for Jesus! Those covetous people, who give a few cheese-parings to His cause! Those inconsistent people whom you would not know to be Christian professors if they did not label themselves! What! such beings followers of a crucified Saviour?"

Lastly, men love to hear Mr. Spurgeon, because, as

Sheridan said of Rowland Hill, "his ideas come *red-hot from the heart.*" Wesley once said to his brother Charles, who was drawing him away from a mob, in which some coarse women were vituperating in eloquent billingsgate, "Stop, Charles, and learn how to preach." The earnestness, courage, and passion which made these fishwomen eloquent in a petty squabble, Wesley thought, if transferred to the pulpit, could not fail powerfully to move the hearts of the people. Mr. Spurgeon is not a sensational preacher, nor a maker of fine phrases, a lettered and polished orator. He is unlike as possible those clerical icicles with whom the artistic air kills everything, and whose greatest fault is that they are absolutely faultless. He is no less unlike those clerical Jehus who take delight in sweeping with their chariot-wheels to the very edge of some precipice of heresy, so as to call forth a shriek from startled orthodox nerves. He has no half beliefs, no sickly sentimentalism, no mental reservations, but a direct, intense, Bunyan-like apprehension of the Gospel of Christ, and he preaches it fully and fervidly, as God has given him ability, to mankind. Believing in the truths of revelation with his whole soul,— tormented with none of those lurking doubts, that semi-skepticism which so often paralyzes the pulpit in our day,— rejecting utterly what he regards as a Christless Christianity, from which the supernatural element has been eliminated, — he urges those truths home upon his hearers with the whole force of his nature. Supremely indifferent to the modern philosophic statements, the literary refinements of doctrine,— regarding with utter scorn the nice, hair-splitting discriminations between what we may know of a doctrine and what we may not, that leave us in the

end with hardly anything to know about it,—he proclaims, Sabbath after Sabbath, without abatement, mincing, or softening, those grand old truths, as he regards them, which Calvin, and Augustine, and Paul proclaimed before him. And what has been the result? As he himself once said to a lady who observed that the secret of his success was Christ, and Christ only, he is "constantly striking on the old piece of iron, and it is no wonder that it sometimes gets hot." While those timid preachers of the modern school, who

> "Would not in a peremptory tone
> Assert the nose on their face their own,"

and who know just how much truth it is prudent to dole out, are left to utter their nicely-turned periods to empty pews, this Puritanic preacher, who comes from what John Foster calls "the morass of Anabaptism," is listened to with such delight, that even from a church that holds six or seven thousand souls, hundreds go away, Sabbath after Sabbath, unable to find a standing-place. He is a living refutation of the statement, so often and so confidently made, that the preacher of our day who stays in what are called "the old ruts" of theology, and who takes no stock in the modern "progressive ideas," has lost his hold upon the people; and proves, beyond all gainsaying, that, even in this age of Darwins and Huxleys and Mills, the most popular pulpit orator is not he who panders to their love of excitement, novelty, or rhetoric, but he who thunders forth with ceaseless iteration those grand old truisms, which, even in this day of new theologies, are still the best things left upon the earth.

RECOLLECTIONS OF JUDGE STORY.

IN the year 1836 the writer entered the Law School at Cambridge, and saw for the first time Judge Story, whose pupil he was for some two years to be. Rarely has the physiognomy of a distinguished man, whose looks we had previously pictured to ourself, contrasted so strikingly as in this instance with our ideal. Instead of a man "severe and stern to view," with an awe-inspiring countenance in every hue and lineament of which justice was legibly written, and whose whole demeanor manifested a fearful amount of stiffness, starch, and dignity,— in short, an incarnation of law, bristling all over with technicalities and subtleties,— a walking Coke upon Littleton,— we saw before us a sunny, smiling face which bespoke a heart full of kindness, and listened to a voice whose musical tones imparted interest to everything it communicated, whether dry subtleties of the law, or reminiscences of the "giants of those days" when he was a practitioner at the bar, and of which he was so eloquent a panegyrist.

Further acquaintance deepened our first impressions; we found that he was the counsellor, guide, philosopher, and friend of all his pupils; that, without the slightest forfeiture of self-respect, he could chat, jest, and laugh with all; and that if he never looked the Supreme Court judge, or assumed the airs of a Sir Oracle, it was simply

because he had a real dignity, an inward greatness of soul, which rendered it needless that he should protect himself from intrusion by any *chevaux-de-frise* of formalities,—still less by the frizzled, artificial locks, black robes, and portentous seals of a British judge, who, without the insignia of his office, would almost despise himself. Overflowing as the Judge was with legal lore, which bubbled up as from a perennial fountain, he made no display of learning; in this matter, as in the other, he never led one to suspect the absence of the reality by his over-preciseness and niceness about the shadow. His pupil did not pass many hours in his presence before he learned, too, that the same fertile mind that could illumine the depths of constitutional law, and solve the knottiest and most puzzling problems of commercial jurisprudence, could also enliven the monotony of recitation by a keen witticism or a sparkling pun. Though thirty years and more have elapsed since the time of which we speak, we can yet see him in fancy as plainly as we see his portrait hanging before us. It is two o'clock P.M.; he walks briskly into the recitation-room, his face wreathed with smiles, and, laying down his white hat, takes his seat at the table, puts on his spectacles, and with a semi-quizzical look inquires, as he glances about the room:

"Where do I begin to-day? Ah! Mr. L——, I believe you *dodged out* yesterday just before I reached you: so we'll begin with you."

This sally provokes a laugh in which the Judge joins as heartily as the students; and then begins perhaps an examination in "Long on Sales," a brief treatise, which suggests the remark that "Long is short, and short

because he *is* Long; a writer who can condense into a small book what others would spin out into volumes."

Probably no two teachers of equal ability were ever associated, who were more unlike in the constitution of their minds, and who conducted a recitation in modes more dissimilar, than Judge Story and Professor Greenleaf. The latter, the beau ideal of a lawyer in his physique, was severe and searching in the class-room, probing the student to the quick, accepting no half-answers, or vague, general statements for accurate replies, showing no mercy to laziness; and when he commented on the text, it was always in the fewest and pithiest words that would convey the ideas. Language in his mouth seemed to have proclaimed a sumptuary law, forbidding that it should in any case overstep the limits of the thought. Indolent students, who had skimmed over the lesson, dreaded his scrutiny, for they knew that an examination by him was a literal *weighing* of their knowledge — that they could impose on him by no shams. Judge Story's forte, on the other hand, was in lecturing, not in questioning; in communicating information, not in ascertaining the exact sum of the pupil's knowledge. In most cases his questions were put in such a way as to suggest the answer: for example, having stated two modes of legal proceeding under certain circumstances, he would ask the student — "Would you adopt the former course, or would you *rather* adopt the latter?" "I would rather adopt the latter," the student would reply, who perhaps had not looked at the lesson. "You are right," would be the comment of the kind-hearted Dane Professor; "Lord Mansfield himself could not have answered more correctly." Whether he was

too good-natured to put the student on the rack, or thought the time might be more profitably spent, we know not; but no one feared to recite because he was utterly ignorant of the lesson.

The manner of the Judge, when lecturing, was that of an enthusiast rather than that of a professional teacher. The recitation,— if recitation it could be called, where the professor was questioned on many days nearly as often as the student,— was not confined to the text-book; but everything that could throw light upon the subject in hand,— all the limitations or modifications of the principles laid down by the author,— were fully stated, and illustrated by numerous apt examples. The book was merely the starting-point, whence excursions were made into all the cognate provinces of the law from which the *opima spolia* of a keen and searching intellect and a capacious memory could be gathered. His readiness of invention, as his son has remarked in the biography of his father, was particularly exhibited in the facility and exhaustless ingenuity with which he supplied fictitious cases to illustrate a principle, and shaped the circumstances so as to expose and make prominent the various exceptions to which it was subject. Often his illustrations were drawn from incidents of the day, and the listless student whose ears had been pricked up by some amusing tale or anecdote, found that all this was but the gilding of the pill, and that he had been cheated into swallowing a large dose of legal wisdom. Thus "he attracted the mind along instead of driving it. Alive himself, he made the law alive. His lectures were not bundles of dried fagots, but of budding scions. Like the Chinese juggler, he planted the seed, and made it grow before the eyes of his pupils into a tree."

Few men have ever been less subject to moods. He had no fits of enthusiasm. Of those alternations of mental sunshine and gloom,—of buoyancy and depression,—to which most men, and especially men of genius, are subject, he seemed to know nothing. Nor did he, even when most overwhelmed with work, manifest any sense of weariness. After having tried a tedious and intricate case in the United States Court Room in Boston, he was as fresh, elastic, and vivacious in the recitation room as if he had taken a mountain walk or some other bracing exercise. He had that rare gift, the faculty of communicating, and loved, above all things else, to communicate knowledge. The one ruling passion of his mind was what a French writer calls "un gout dominant d'instruire et *documenter quelqu'un.*" Few men with equal stores of learning have had a more perfect command of their acquisitions. All his knowledge, whether gathered from musty black-letter folios or from modern octavos, was at the tip of his tongue. He had no unsmelted gold or bullion, but kept his intellectual riches in the form of current coin, as negotiable as it was valuable. His extraordinary fluency, his vast acquirement, his sympathy with the young, and especially his personal magnetism, eminently fitted him to be a teacher. To smooth the pathway of the legal learner, to give him a clue by which to thread the labyrinths of jurisprudence, to hold a torch by which to light his way through its dark passages,—above all, to kindle in his breast some of his own ever-burning enthusiasm,—was to the Judge a constant joy. We doubt if ever a dull hour was known in his lecture-room. His perennial liveliness; his frankness and *abandon;* his "winning smile, that

played lambent as heat-lightning around his varying countenance"; his bubbling humor; his contagious, merry, and irresistible laugh; his exhaustless fund of incident and anecdote, with which he never failed to give piquancy and zest to the driest and most crabbed themes,— all won not only the attention, but the love, of his pupils, and he who could have yawned amid such stimulants to attention, must have been dull indeed. Only a dunce or a beatified intelligence could listen uninterested to such a teacher.

So prodigal was he of his intellectual riches, so lavish of his learning, wit, and anecdote, that the fear of every new-comer was, that he would exhaust himself; but the apprehension was soon allayed; the stream never ceased, but went pouring on its sparkling waters with undiminished volume, till the hearer felt that he was in the condition described by Robert Hall when speaking during his lunacy of the conversation of Mackintosh,—"It seemed like the Euphrates pouring into a teacup." Of all the themes which Judge Story loved to discuss, the constitutional history of the country was the favorite. When lecturing upon this subject, on which he never was weary of expatiating, and all the smallest details as well as the grand facts of which were at the tip of his tongue, his enthusiasm and eloquence were at the height. Especially fond was he at such times of describing the great men of other days,— the Marshalls, Pinkneys, Dexters, Martins, and other giants of the law,— whom he had known and associated with; and of holding up their characters, their Herculean industry, their integrity, and other virtues, as models to be imitated. With breathless interest we listened as he spoke of the principles of the Constitution,

— the views of the great men by whom it was drawn,— of the dangers to which the country was exposed,— of the anxiety with which the experiment of a republican government was watched across the sea,— and closed with an exhortation to us to labor for the promotion of justice, to liberalize and expand the law, to scorn all trickery and chicanery in its practice, and to deem no victory worth winning if won by the arts of the trickster and the pettifogger.

Few of the old graduates of Dane Law School will forget the scene that occurred on his return from the winter session of the Supreme Court at Washington. The announcement of his return was sure to fill the lecture-room, and he was welcomed with all the joyousness, and with the hearty grasp of the hand, with which a loving father is welcomed home by his children. How eagerly we gathered around him, and plied him with questions concerning the great cases that had been argued at Washington, and with what kindling enthusiasm would he describe to us the keen contests between the athletes of the bar, as one would have described to a company of squires and pages,— to use the illustration of one of his pupils, R. H. Dana,— a tournament of monarchs and nobles on a field of cloth of gold; how Webster spoke in this case, Legaré, or Clay, or Crittenden, or Choate, in that, and all "the currents of the heady fight." In vain, at any such times as we have described, did the clock peal or the bell clang the hour of adjournment. On the lecturer went, oblivious of the lapse of time, pouring forth a continuous and sparkling stream of anecdote and reminiscence, or throwing "a light as from a painted window" upon the dark passages of constitutional history, and charming the

dullest listener by his eloquence, till the bell for evening prayers announced that now he must cease, and his hearers departed, hoping that he would resume the broken thread of his discourse to-morrow. Some of these anecdotes and reminiscences, as we heard them from his lips, with a few others published just after his death in a Boston journal, will make up the rest of this paper.

Judge Story was an intimate friend and warm admirer of William Pinkney, whom, in spite of his dandyisms and affectations, he regarded as one of the ablest and most scholarly lawyers in the country. Mr. Pinkney, said he, dressed always with fastidious elegance, and looked as if he had just come from his dressing-room, and was going to a fashionable party. His coat, of the finest blue, was nicely brushed; his boots shone with the highest polish; his waistcoat, of immaculate whiteness, glittered with gold buttons; he carried in his hand a light cane, with which he played; and his whole appearance was that of a man of fashion rather than that of a profound and laborious lawyer. He was exceedingly ambitious, fond of admiration, and never spoke without an eye to effect. He would spend weeks of hard labor upon a case, and, when it was called up for trial, would beg earnestly to have it postponed on the ground that he had had no time for preparation; and when informed by the Court that it could not be deferred longer, would rise and astonish everybody by a profound and elaborate argument, which he wished to be regarded as an impromptu burst of genius. Another trick of his was to quote from a law-book a passage which he had just previously read and got by heart for the very occasion, and pretending he had not seen it for a long time, but had no doubt of its tenor, to

cite it in support of the doctrine he had maintained. The counsel on the other side would perhaps deny the correctness of the citation, when Mr. Pinkney would call for the book, and, to the surprise of everybody, would read from it the exact words he had quoted, without the change of a syllable. In spite of these affectations, however, he was a brilliant and powerful lawyer, a fine scholar, and a man of vast resources; and if in the contests of the forum he did not stand confessed as *facile princeps*,—the victor of every contest,—yet he was admitted by all who witnessed his displays to be surpassed by none of the athletes with whom he was wont to wrestle in the legal arena. Nothing could be more logical or luminous than his reasoning; his very statement of a case was itself an argument.

Among the giants of the bar with whom Mr. Pinkney was accustomed to grapple, continued the Judge, was the Irish exile, Thomas Addis Emmet. "I shall never forget the first case in which these two men were pitted against each other, and tested each other's mettle. It was a case of prize law, and Mr. Pinkney, being perfect master of that branch of the law, in which his antagonist was but slightly versed, and having the advantage moreover of being at home in the arena to which Mr. Emmet was a stranger, gained an easy victory, and not content with that, was somewhat haughty and overbearing in his manner, as he was too apt to be when he lacked a foeman worthy of his steel. Stung by this contemptuous treatment, Mr. Emmet determined to supply his own defects, and, for the next three or four months, devoted himself almost exclusively to the study of that department of the law in which he had been unable to cope with the great Marylander. At the

end of that time he was employed as counsel in opposition to Mr. Pinkney, in the famous case of the 'Nereide,' on the decision of which depended the ownership of a large and very valuable cargo. The speech of Mr. Emmet on this occasion was a masterpiece of argument, learning, and eloquence, and placed him by universal consent in the very front rank of American lawyers. In his eloquent exordium he spoke of the embarrassment of his situation, the novelty of the forum, and the deep interest which the public took in the cause. He spoke in glowing terms of the genius and accomplishments of his opponent, whose fame had extended beyond the Atlantic; and then, in language the most delicate and touching, he alluded to the contrast presented by his own life to this brilliant career,— to the circumstances which had exiled him from his country,— and to the treatment he had received from Mr. Pinkney at the previous trial. All this was said with an air so modest and in terms so full of pathos, that his audience, including the veteran attorneys and gray-headed judges of the Supreme Court, were moved to tears. He then proceeded to his argument, which exhibited a profound knowledge and a firm grasp of the law applicable to the case, and by its powerful logic excited the admiration of both bar and court. Upon his sitting down, Mr. Pinkney at once arose and prefaced his argument,— which, I need not say, was worthy of his abilities and fame,— with an apology for his former unkind treatment of Mr. Emmet, couched in the most elegant and polished language, surpassing even the latter in pathos, and breathing sentiments so noble and magnanimous, that again the entire assembly,— lawyers, court, and spectators,—were moved to tears, which this time fell more plenteously 'than from Arabian trees their medicinal gums.' When the

Court adjourned, I asked the author of this masterly and eloquent speech if he would not write out the substance of it, so far as he could recall it,—for of course I could not expect him to give me the *exact words* of an exordium thus extemporized,—and let me have a copy. 'Come with me to dinner,' was the reply, 'and we'll talk about the matter.' I dined with him, and after we had risen from the table, he drew from a drawer a large roll of manuscript, elegantly written,—for he wrote a beautiful hand,—and *containing his entire speech word for word as he had delivered it*, not only the argument, but the *impromptu* exordium which had so charmed and affected all who heard it! The truth was, that, with the divining instinct of genius, he had guessed correctly at the course which his adversary would pursue, and carefully prepared himself accordingly."

The case was decided adversely to Mr. Pinkney's client, Judge Story dissenting from the opinion of the other members of the Court. Scarcely, however, had the decision been made, when intelligence came across the Atlantic that Lord Stowell, the head of the Admiralty Court of England, one of the highest authorities in maritime law, had, in a case involving precisely the same principles of prize law as that of the "Nereide," made a decision directly the opposite to that of the United States Supreme Court. With the mention of this fact, so gratifying to his pride of opinion, Judge Story triumphantly closed his narration.

At another time Judge Story told the following anecdote of Samuel Dexter, Fisher Ames, and Chief Justice Marshall. "Mr. Dexter was a remarkable man,—a man whom, to use Burke's language, if you should meet and talk with him a few minutes on a rainy day under a shed, you would at

once pronounce a great man. The first time I met him I knew not who he was, and stared in wonderment. Yet his was rather a brilliant mind than a truly great one. Mr. Dexter was once in company with Fisher Ames and Chief Justice Marshall, when the latter began a conversation, or rather a monologue, which lasted some three hours. On their way homeward, Ames and Dexter vied with each other in extolling the learning and mental grasp of their host. After a brief walk, Ames said: 'To tell the truth, Dexter, I have not understood a word of his argument for half an hour.' 'And I,' as frankly responded Dexter, 'have been out of *my* depth for an hour and a half.'"

Judge Story was an ardent admirer of Albert Gallatin, whom he ranked as the peer of Alexander Hamilton. Both of these gentlemen, he observed, were foreigners, and they landed on our shores about the same time. "When, as Secretary of the Treasury under Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Gallatin succeeded to Mr. Hamilton, he made no changes, though the latter belonged to the opposing party. Unlike the Italian on whose tombstone was inscribed the significant epitaph, 'I was well, I wished to be better, and I am here,' he did not try to improve upon that which was good. When Mr. Gallatin was a member of Congress, he said to me one day: 'We have plenty of eloquence upon the floor,—aye, and *too much!* It is the hard-working committee-man who is needed; the man who rarely speaks, but who can apply himself to hard, dry, yet important statistical labor. Figures of this kind are far weightier and more useful than figures of speech.' If this was true in the days of Mr. Gallatin, what is the fact now?"

The haste and recklessness with which laws are made and repealed in this country, was a frequent topic of the

Judge's denunciation. He once asked an eminent gentleman from Tennessee why the legislature of that State did not meet annually, as did the legislatures of other States. The reply was, "that the laws might have at least a trial before they were repealed,"—a sarcasm not more pointed than just.

Judge Story accounted for the provision in the United States Constitution requiring that a person be thirty-five years of age to render him eligible to the office of Senator, by the fact that the framers of that instrument were very distrustful of young men. "He is not yet fifty years old," was an argument which annihilated a canvasser's pretensions. "Some of the ablest statesmen, however, that the world has seen, were young men; for example, Fox, and Pitt, who at twenty-three was by far the ablest man in Parliament. I am aware that I go counter to the judgment of many when I pronounce William Pitt an incomparably greater man than his father, Lord Chatham, a man who was often strangely inconsistent. You all remember his eloquent denunciation of the lord who recommended the employment of the Indians against the Americans in the war of the Revolution; and yet the man from whose lips fell this burst of indignation filed in the British Cabinet a letter in his own handwriting advising the very measure which, when urged by another, he characterizes as infamous!"

Judge Story was a profound admirer of Chief Justice Marshall, and could rarely hear his name mentioned without digressing to panegyrize his learning and intellectual power. "Marshall's favorite expression, said he, was 'It is admitted.' So resistless was his logic, that it was a common remark of the bar, that if you once admitted his

premises, it was all over with you. You were forced to his conclusions; and the only safety, therefore, was in denying everything he asserted. Daniel Webster once said to me,—'When Judge Marshall says, *It is admitted, sir*, I am preparing for a bomb to burst over my head, and demolish all my points.'"

"Some years ago," remarked the Judge, "I saw a book advertised, entitled 'New Views of the Constitution.' I was startled. What right has a man to announce *new* views upon this subject? Speculations upon our government are dangerous, and should be frowned upon. That great statesman, Edmund Burke, has wisely and sententiously said,—'Governments are practical things, not toys for speculists to play with.' And yet governments must often change, to meet the demands of the times. I have been in public life nearly forty years, and have seen great changes in the country. Men may flatter themselves that now, at least, all is settled; but no! our laws are written upon the sands of time, and the winds of popular opinion gradually efface them; new layers are to be made, and your old writing renewed or changed."

The following statement was made by the Judge to illustrate the extreme difficulty of framing statutes so as to avoid all ambiguity in their language. Being once employed by Congress to draft an important law, he spent six months in trying to perfect its phraseology, so that its sense would be clear beyond the shadow of a doubt, and not the smallest loophole could be found for a lawyer to creep through. And yet, in less than a year afterward, after having heard the arguments of two able attorneys, he was utterly unable, in a suit which came before him as a Judge of the Supreme Court, to decide upon the statute's meaning.

Being asked one day whether John Tyler was President or Acting President of the United States at the demise of President Harrison, Judge Story replied: "A nice question, gentlemen, and hard to solve. The question was debated in Cabinet meeting; but, on Mr. Webster's opinion, Mr. Tyler was addressed as President. On one occasion, when Chief Justice Taney, of the Supreme Court, was ill, I took his place as Chief Justice, and was thus addressed. At first I felt nervous; but soon becoming used to it, I found it, like public money to new members of Congress, '*not bad to take.*' And this was probably the feeling of Mr. Tyler."

Judge Story was fond of telling that Mr. Webster, on one or two occasions, after grumbling at a legal decision of the former, had afterwards the magnanimity to acknowledge that he was wrong. We are sure that when the Judge himself was in error, he was frank, on discovering it, to avow the fact. One day in the Moot Court, a student, arguing a case before him, said: "My next authority will be one which your Honor will not be disposed to question,— a decision by Mr. Justice Story, of the United States Supreme Court." "I beg your pardon," said the Judge, bowing; "but that opinion by Mr. Justice Story is *not* law."

It was well observed by Charles Sumner, in his eulogy on Judge Story, that any just estimate of the man and his works must have regard to his three different characters,— as a judge, as an author, and as a teacher. When we look at his books only, we are astonished at his colossal industry: it seems almost incredible that a single mind, in a single life, should have been able to accomplish so much. His written judgments on his own circuit, and his various commentaries, occupy twenty-seven

volumes, and his judgments in the Supreme Court of the United States form an important part of thirty-four volumes. Rightly does Mr. Sumner characterize him as the Lope de Vega, or the Walter Scott, of the Common Law. With far more truth might it be said of him than was said by Dryden of one of the greatest British lawyers:

> "Our law that did a boundless ocean seem,
> Was coasted all and fathomed all by him."

Besides all his legal labors, he delivered many discourses on literary and scientific subjects, wrote many biographical sketches of his contemporaries, elaborate reviews for the "North American," drew up learned memorials to Congress, made long speeches in the Massachusetts Legislature, contributed largely to the "Encyclopædia Americana," prepared Reports on Codification, etc., and drafted some of the most important Acts of Congress. The secret of these vast achievements was ceaseless, methodical industry, frequent change of labor, and concentration of mind. He economized odd moments, bits and fragments of time, never overworked, and, when he worked, concentrated upon the subject all the powers of his intellect. Add to this, that his knowledge did not lie in undigested heaps in his mind, but was thoroughly assimilated, so as to become a part of his mental constitution. His brain was a vast repository of legal facts and principles, each one of which had its cell or pigeon-hole, from which it was always forthcoming the instant it was wanted.

No other American lawyer or jurist has so wide-spread a European fame. His legal works, republished in England, are recognized as of the highest authority in all the courts of that country; and his "Conflict of Laws,"

— embodying the essence of all similar works, as well as the fruits of his own deep thinking, — a work of enormous labor, upon a most intricate and perplexing theme, — has been translated into many European languages, and is cited as the most exhaustive discussion of the subject. Yet, — such is fame, — this man whose name had crossed the Atlantic, and was on the lips of the profoundest jurists of the Old World, had comparatively little reputation in his lifetime among his own countrymen. Men immeasurably inferior to him, intellectually and morally, overshadowed him in the public mind. And yet no man was more susceptible to merited praise than he. While he despised flattery, and could detect the least taint of it with the quickness of an instinct, his heart was yet as fresh and tender as a child's, and he felt neglect as keenly as the bud the frost. Not soon shall we forget the good humor, mingled with a sensibility that could not be concealed, with which he told the following story of himself, illustrating the saying that "a prophet is not without honor, save in his own country":

"One day I was called suddenly to Boston, to attend to some business matters, and on my way thither I discovered that I had forgotten my pocket-book. It was too late to return, and so when the omnibus halted at the Port (Cambridgeport, half-way between Old Cambridge, the Judge's residence, and Boston,) I ran hastily into the neighboring bank, and asked to be accommodated with a hundred dollars. The cashier stared at me as if he thought me insane; but I noticed that he particularly scrutinized my feet; and then he coldly informed me that he had not the pleasure of recognizing me. I imme-

diately told him my name, supposing that it might have reached, at least, the limits of my own place of residence. He still kept his eyes upon my feet, and finally, as I was about to leave, more chagrined than disappointed, he requested me to step back, adding that he would be pleased to accommodate me. Upon my inquiring the reason of his delay, he replied: 'Sir, I have never heard your name before, but I know you must be a gentleman *from the looks of your boots.*'" The unction and perfect good humor with which the Judge told this anecdote, and the joyous laugh with which he concluded it,—aside from the absurdity that such a man should be judged of by his material *understanding*,—were irresistible. We need not add, that his pupils laughed, as Falstaff says, "without intervellums,"—till their faces were "like a wet cloak ill laid up."

We have spoken of Judge Story's wit. Like Cicero, Burke, Erskine, and many other great lawyers, he loved a keen witticism, and did not consider it beneath his dignity to perpetrate a telling pun. Once at a Phi Beta Kappa dinner, Edward Everett, then Governor of Massachusetts, gave as a toast: "The legal profession: however high its other members may climb, they can never rise higher than *one Story*." The shouts of applause which greeted this sally were redoubled when Judge Story jumped up and responded with the following: "Fame follows applause where-*ever it* (Everett) goes."

We doubt if any teacher ever loved his pupils more deeply, or was more universally loved by them, than the subject of this article. In the success of his "boys," as he called them, both at the school and in their after life, he felt a profound interest; their triumphs were his tri-

umphs, and their failures caused him the keenest pain. The tact with which he adapted himself to the various temperaments and idiosyncrasies of his pupils, and the patience with which he bore any one's dullness, were also remarkable. We remember that one day a somewhat eccentric and outspoken student from Tennessee came to the Judge in the library of the Law School, and holding up an old folio, said: "Judge, what do you understand by this here Rule in Shelley's Case? I've been studying it three days, and can't make anything of it." "Shelley's Case! Shelley's Case!" exclaimed the Judge, with a look of astonishment, as he took the volume and held it up before his eyes,—"Do you expect to understand *that* in three days? Why, it took *me* three weeks!"

One of the hobbies of Judge Story was the great blessings conferred on society by Courts of Equity, in remedying the defects of the Common Law. A favorite way of exposing these defects, was to put a case in which the inadequacy of the latter was strikingly apparent, and then naïvely ask the student: "Does it occur to you, Mr. ——, where your remedy in such a case would lie?" The invariable answer, "In a Court of Equity, Sir," was so often repeated that it always provoked a smile from the students. Like many eminent men, Judge Story had his pet quotations, anecdotes, and maxims, which he never wearied of repeating. Few of his living pupils can have forgotten the favorite "*Causa proxima, non remota spectatur*," or the oft-cited aphorism of Rochefoucauld, "There is always something in the misfortunes of our best friends which does not displease us,"— which must have impressed itself on the Judge's memory simply because in his nature there was not the slightest tincture of the cynicism which the sentiment expresses.

When a young lawyer, Judge Story published a volume entitled "Solitude, and other Poems"— a literary venture which he deeply regretted in after life. Most of the pieces were of the kind which "neither men, gods, nor booksellers' columns can endure," and the dedication began,—

"Maid of my heart, to thee I string my lyre."

Of this production few copies are extant,— the author having bought up and destroyed all he could find. There are two copies in Harvard College Library. He also published a Fourth-of-July oration, which contained about the average number of "spread-eagles." The ease with which he rhymed is well illustrated by the following verses. Chancing to step into the office of the Salem "Register," just as the first number was about to be issued, he was asked by the editor to write a motto for that newspaper. Taking a pen, young Story dashed off the following impromptu:

"Here shall the press the people's rights maintain,
Unawed by influence, and unbribed by gain:
Here patriot truth her glorious precepts draw,
Pledged to religion, liberty, and law."

During the lifetime of Judge Story, a volume of "Miscellanies" from his pen was published, containing his literary orations, contributions to reviews, and his beautiful address at the consecration of Mount Auburn Cemetery. There, under the trees that overshadow the lovely dell in which he spoke, lie his remains; and in the chapel, near the entrance to this home of the dead, stands a marble statue of the great jurist, executed by his son, W. W. Story, the sculptor and poet,— an exquisite work of art, in which all the characteristic qualities of the original are idealized, yet most faithfully reproduced and preserved.

MORAL GRAHAMISM.

MANY of our readers doubtless remember Sylvester Graham, the great originator and expounder of the bran-bread system of diet, and his theories. They remember how eloquently he inveighed against the consumption of animal food, and how he startled all the old ladies, both male and female, throughout the length and breadth of the land, by telling them that tea was a slow poison, which would infallibly shorten their lives. It is said that one venerable old lady, who had entered upon her ninety-second year, abandoned with horror the delicious beverage, resolved never to touch "the pizen" again, lest she should not live out half of her days. Many was the stout Falstaff that pined away to a skeleton under the Graham regimen. Robustious, corpulent fellows,—perfect Daniel Lamberts in ponderosity,—who had trundled along a mountain of flesh before trying a pea-soup diet, were suddenly reduced so thin as hardly to have weight enough to turn a money-scale, or opaqueness to cast a shadow. Horace Greeley came near being reduced to a "dried neat's tongue, a mere dagger of lath," or second Calvin Edson, by the experiment. At one time Graham had some ten thousand or more disciples in this country, who not only were the sworn foes of beef, pork and mutton, but denounced Mocha and old Government Java, scorned even Dr. Parr's compromise con-

cerning tea,— "non possum *te*cum vivere, nec sine *te*," — and declared, with Hood, that

> "If wine is a poison, so is tea,
> Only in another shape;
> What matter if one die
> By canister or grape?

By long searching, Graham might now, if alive, muster a baker's dozen of followers; but probably, if they were marshaled, he would exclaim, with Falstaff, "I'll not march through Coventry with them, that's flat. Nay, and the villains march wide betwixt the legs, as if they had gyves on."

Now, just as there are Grahamites who think that, because they are virtuous, there shall be "no more cakes and ale,"— living skeletons, who

> "defy
> That which they love most tenderly;
> Quarrel with minced pie, and disparage
> Their best and dearest friend, plum-porridge;
> Fat ox and goose itself oppose,
> And blaspheme custard through the nose," —

so there are moral Grahamites, too. They have a certain course of mental dietetics, which they declare to be most conducive to the welfare of man, the microcosm, in his relations to the macrocosm. The moral Grahamites are the men who set their faces against the higher and more difficult branches of education taught in our colleges; who prefer the wholesome bran-bread of the practical sciences to the roast-beef and plum-pudding of scholastic lore. Give us, they say, the man who makes a new mowing-machine, or a Hobbs-defying, burglar-proof lock, harder to be opened than the riddle of the Egyptian sphinx; give us the man who can construct a tunnel under Lake Michigan,— who can build a railroad across the Rocky Mountains, or a first-

rate steamship. Such men are the great benefactors and movers of the world. The poet Longfellow, who makes Golden Legends; his neighbor, Winlock, who scoops up new asteroids from the depths of space; Powers, who carves statues in marble; Bierstadt, who transports us amid the marvels of the Yosemite; Whitney, who detects the affinities of remote languages, and Emerson, who cultivates divine philosophy,—find little favor with our Grahamites. Look, they say, at Pullman and his palace restaurant cars, and at Donald McKay and his big ships! Donald is the greatest man on our seaboard. And certainly, if Providence intended that shipbuilding should be the end of our creation, he would be greater than Socrates or Plato, Shakspeare or Milton, and only equaled by Vanderbilt, James Fisk, Jr., or the late filibustering, lawless George Law.

But what is this "practical" education for which so many persons are clamoring? Are there any two persons among them who can agree as to what it is? If by practical education is meant that minimum of training and teaching which will just enable a man to house, clothe and feed himself,—to pay his bills and keep clear of the poorhouse, which is summed up in the three R's, "Readin', Ritin' and Rithmetic,"—then we deny that such an education subserves, in the highest degree, even its own petty and selfish ends. The wretched economy which tries to sift the so-called practical from the true, the good, and the beautiful, fails to get even the good it covets. But the most popular idea of a practical education is that which regards it as a training for a particular calling or profession. Our colleges are begged to treat Smith's son as an incipient tape-seller, Brown's as an undeveloped broker,

Thompson's as an embryo engineer, and Jones's as a budding attorney. Well, we admit to the fullest extent the right of Smith, Brown, Thompson, and Jones, juniors, to qualify themselves for any occupation they choose; but we deny their right to demand of the State or of our colleges a special training which shall qualify them for buying calico, building bridges, drawing declarations, or speculating in stocks. Young men demand an education which shall make them good merchants, lawyers, and carpenters; but they need first of all, and more imperiously than all things else, to be educated as *men*.

Of a piece of timber you may make a mast, a machine, a piano, or a pulpit; but, first of all, it must become *timber*, sound, solid, and well seasoned. The highest and truest education is not that which develops, trains, and strengthens this or that faculty, but that which vitalizes and stimulates *all* the faculties; which does for the mind what the gymnasium does for the body,—*energizes* it by robust and bracing exercises. Whatever does this most effectually,—whatever makes the mind of the pupil conscious of its own energies, and gives it the power of rightly using them,—is the very thing he needs, however little use he may have for it after the drill is over. The thing he is taught,—the lesson learned,—is not the *end*, but the *means* of education. There can be no greater mistake made, than to suppose that a man is losing his time, unless he is learning something which can be turned to immediate account in the calling to which he is destined. Professor Malden, in a lecture on the "Introduction of the Natural Sciences into General Education," has so ably exposed this fallacy, that we cannot help quoting the passage. In speaking of the demand made by some parents that education should have a direct relation

to gainful pursuits,—that, for example, a boy who is to spend his days among figures and calculations, in buying or in selling, in constructing engines or in navigating ships, should not "waste his time" in mastering Greek or Latin, the writer says:

"If the education of the body were the matter in question, instead of the education of the mind, the absurdity of this conduct would be abundantly manifest. Put the case of a boy of a weakly constitution and effeminate habits; and suppose that family connections and interest make it seem desirable that he should enter the army, and that he is committed to the care of some one,—an old soldier, if you like,—who professes to prepare him for his military career. At the end of four or five years, when he ought to obtain his commission, his father may think it right to inquire into his fitness for his profession. 'Have you studied tactics?' 'No, sir.' 'Have you studied gunnery?' 'No, sir.' 'Are you perfect in the last instructions issued from the Horse Guards for the manœuvres of cavalry?' 'I have not seen them, sir.' 'Have you learned the broad-sword exercise?' 'No.' 'Can you put a company of infantry through their drill?' 'No.' 'Have you practiced platoon firing?' 'No.' 'Can you even fix a bayonet in a musket?' 'I have never tried, sir.' After such an examination, we may suppose the father expostulating indignantly with the veteran under whose care his son had been placed. The latter might reply: 'Sir, when you entrusted your son to my training, he was weak and sickly; he had little appetite, and was fastidious in his eating; he could bear no exposure to the weather; he could not walk two miles without fatigue; he was incapable of any severer exercise; he was unwilling, and indeed unable, to join in the athletic sports

of boys of his age. Now he is in perfect health, and wants and wishes for no indulgence; he can make a hearty dinner on any wholesome food, or go without it, if need be; he will get wet through, and care nothing about it; he can walk twelve or fifteen miles a day; he can ride; he can swim; he can skate; he can play a game at cricket, and enjoy it; though he has not learnt the broad-sword exercise, he fences well; though he has never handled a soldier's musket, he is an excellent shot with a fowling-piece; he has a firm foot, a quick eye, and a steady hand; he is a very pretty draughtsman; he is eager to enter his profession; and you may take my word for it, sir, he will make a brave and active officer.' "

Was ever a method of training more triumphantly vindicated? The principle upon which the veteran rests his argument is, that by his system he has invigorated the physical constitution of his pupil, and so *has fitted him for any profession* in which habits of activity or of endurance may be required,—a principle which is equally sound when applied to the discipline of the mind. In the ancient gymnasium, the first end sought was to produce a muscular man, an athlete. When this was accomplished, it mattered little whether he entered the lists of the wrestler, or of the boxer, or of the racer. The first and most indispensable requisite to success in any calling above that of a day-laborer, is mental vigor. A man may have a head crammed with information; he may be a walking encyclopædia of facts and opinions, of dates and statistics on this subject and that; but without intellectual force, a trained and athletic mind, he is little better than the case that contains the books from which his knowledge has been drawn. The man who has had a special training, directed with exclusive

reference to a particular pursuit, may be well instructed, but in no sense can he be called an *educated* or cultivated man. As the development of a single member or organ of the body is not true physical culture, so the inordinate development of the memory, the imagination, or the reasoning faculty, is not intellectual culture. The first condition of successful bodily labor is health; and, as a man in health can do what an unhealthy man cannot do, and as, of this health, the properties are strength, energy, agility, graceful carriage and action, manual dexterity, and endurance of fatigue, so, in like manner, general culture of mind is the best aid to professional and scientific study, and the educated man can do what the illiterate man cannot. As Prof. J. H. Newman,—himself a brilliant example of the culture that comes from liberal studies,—remarks: "The man who has learned to think, and to reason, and to compare, and to discriminate, and to analyze; who has refined his taste, and formed his judgment, and sharpened his mental vision, will not indeed at once be a lawyer, or a pleader, or an orator, or a statesman, or a physician, or a good landlord, or a man of business, or a soldier, or an engineer, or a chemist, or a geologist, or an antiquarian; but he will be placed in that state of intellect in which he can take up any one of these sciences or callings, or any other for which he has a taste or special talent, with an ease, a grace, a versatility, and a success, to which another is a stranger."

Let us not be misunderstood. We cherish no extreme opinions on this subject. We have no sympathy with those who think that all wisdom is summed up in a knowledge of Greek particles,—with the men who can give exactly all the dates of the petty skirmishes in the

Peloponnesian War, and yet have always supposed that Hyde and Clarendon were different persons,— or men like Dr. George, who doubted whether Frederick the Great, with all his victories, could conjugate a Greek verb in *mi*. We cannot think a tittle less of Burke's genius, because, in the House of Commons, he accented the antepenult instead of the penult of *vectigal;* or of the Duke of Wellington's, because, though he conquered Napoleon, he turned round, when reading his Chancellor's address at Oxford, and whispered, "I say, is it *Jac*-o-bus?" But we do contend that, as the records of human thought are in many languages, so no man can be deemed educated who knows no language but a modern one, and that his own. That person cannot, certainly, be called an intelligent workman who has no care for the state or condition of the instrument with which he works. If the sword be blunt, or made of inferior steel, it will do little execution. If the vessel wants capacity, you cannot freight her with a valuable cargo; or if her engine wants power, she will make little headway against the billows. The mind is the man's instrument, be he lawyer, doctor, merchant, engineer, or farmer; and the stronger and more highly finished the instrument, the better will be its work.

If there is any one faculty of the mind which is more valuable than the others,— which is absolutely indispensable to success in every calling,— it is the judgment. It is the master-principle of business, literature, and science, which qualifies one to grapple with any subject he may apply himself to, and enables him to seize the strong point in it. How is this power to be obtained? Is it by the study of any one subject, however important?

Assuredly not; but only by study and comparison of the most opposite things; by the most varied reading and discipline first, and observation afterwards. If there is one well-ascertained fact in education, it is, that the man who has been trained to think upon one subject will never be a good judge even in that one; whereas the enlargement of his circle gives him increased knowledge and power in a rapidly-increasing ratio,—so much do ideas act, not as solitary units, but by grouping and combination; so necessary is it to know something of a thousand other things, in order to know one thing well.

It is, however, the meanest of all the cants of ignorance to assert that there is any incompatibility between business or practical talents and scholarship,—for the successful booby to cry down accomplishments in the counting-room or the carpenter's shop. As if cultivated intelligence, added to refinement of manners and systematic order, should accomplish less than undisciplined native power!—as if the Damascus blade lost its edge by being polished, or as if the supporting column of an edifice were less strong because its shaft is fluted and its capital carved! We believe that it might easily be shown that a liberal education, which is only another name for intelligence, knowledge, intellectual force, promotes success in every honest calling, even though that calling be to cut cheese or open oysters,—or, even lower still, to make political speeches and electioneer for Congress. But, suppose that it were not so; that it did not contribute one jot or tittle to success, in the vulgar sense of that word. Were men designed to be *mere* merchants, farmers, or mechanics, and nothing more? Man is not a *means*, but an *end*. He claims a generous culture, not because he is to follow the

plow, wield the sledge, or buy and sell wheat or cotton, but because he is *man.* The fact that the ordinary pursuits of life are widely removed from liberal studies is of itself a cogent reason why those who are to be incessantly dealing with material forms should early foster a taste for those studies which, in the language of another, "reclaim men from the dominion of the senses; recruit their overtasked energies; quicken within them the sensibilities of taste; and invite them to the contemplation of whatever is lovely in the sympathies of our common nature, splendid in the conquests of intellect, or heroic in the trials of virtue."

Those who clamor for the so-called "practical education" forget that, antecedent to his calling as merchant, engineer, or carpenter, there is another profession, more important still, for which every man should be trained, "the profession of humanity." As Rousseau, in his famous treatise on education, which contains many golden truths imbedded among its errors, justly says: "Nature has destined us for the offices of human life, antecedently to our destination concerning society. *To live*, is the profession I would teach him [a youth]. *Let him first be a man;* he will, on occasion, as soon become anything else that a man ought to be as any person whatever. Fortune may remove him from one place to another as she pleases; he will always be found in his place." We believe in "practical" education most sincerely; only we would use the word in its broadest and most comprehensive sense. We call that education practical which *educes* all a man's faculties, and gives him possession of himself. We call that practical education which enables a man to bring all his faculties to bear at once with energy and earnestness

on any given point, and to keep them fastened on that point until the task he has set for them is accomplished. We call that education practical which gives a man a clear, conscious view of his own opinions and judgments, and enables him to develop them with fullness, to express them with eloquence, and to urge them with force. That is practical education which teaches him to see things as they are, to go right to the point, to disentangle a skein of thought, to detect what is sophistical, and to discard what is irrelevant. That is practical education which enables him to estimate with precision the worth of an argument, to detect the hidden relations of things, to trace effects to their causes, to grasp a mass of detached and dislocated facts, reduce them to order and harmony, and marshal them under the sway of some general law. That is practical education which enables him to know his own weakness, to command his own passions, to adapt himself to circumstances, to perceive the significance of actions, events, and opinions. That is practical education which opens his mind, expands it, and refines it; fits it to digest, master, and use its knowledge; gives it flexibility, tact, method, critical exactness, sagacity, discrimination, resource, address and expression.

Such a man is full of resources, and prepared for any event. Misfortunes cannot kill him, nor disasters depress him. He organizes victory out of defeat, and converts obstacles into stepping-stones to success. Life to him is never stale, flat, and unprofitable; but always fresh, stimulating, opulent. In the words of the polished writer already quoted, "He is at home in any society; he has common ground with every class; he knows when to speak, and when to be silent; he is able to converse, he

is able to listen; he can ask a question pertinently, and gain a lesson seasonably when he has nothing to impart himself; he is ever ready, yet never in the way; he is a pleasant companion, and a comrade you can depend upon; he knows when to be serious, and when to trifle, and he has a sure tact which enables him to trifle with gracefulness and to be serious with effect. He has the repose of a mind which lives in itself while it lives in the world, and which has resources for its happiness at home when it cannot go abroad. He has a gift which serves him in public and supports him in retirement, without which good fortune is but vulgar, and with which failure and disappointment have a charm."

STRENGTH AND HEALTH.

DIO LEWIS, whose writings on bodiculture, if they are not very profound, have, at least, the merit of brevity and good sense, calls the attention of the public to the prevailing fallacy that strength is a synonym for health. He knows intelligent persons who really believe that you may determine the comparative health of two men by measuring their arms. The man whose arm measures twelve inches is twice as healthy as he whose arm measures but six. "This strange and thoughtless misapprehension," he says, "has given rise to nearly all the mistakes thus far made in the physical-culture movement. I have a friend who can lift nine hundred pounds, and yet is a habitual sufferer from torpid liver, rheumatism, and low spirits. The cartmen of our cities, who are our strongest men, are far from being the healthiest class, as physicians will testify. On the contrary, I have many friends who would stagger under three hundred pounds, that are in capital trim."

These truths seem so obvious, when thus stated and illustrated, as hardly to rise above commonplace. Why, then, repeat them? Because, by the vast majority of "health-lifters," gymnasium-frequenters, and would-be athletes, they are either unknown or practically ignored. Every pale, sickly, pigmy-limbed man wants to be physically strong; to be a Hercules, a son of Anak, at least

a small Heenan, is absolutely essential, he thinks, to the enjoyment of perfect health. If he cannot expect to lift a ton, or to walk a thousand miles in a thousand hours, he must, at least, be able to take a daily "constitutional" of five miles and back, or to raise five hundred pounds without bursting a blood-vessel. But what is the meaning of the word "strong"? From the glibness with which some men repeat the term, one would suppose that nothing is easier than to define it,— that the proposition that a man is very strong is as simple as the proposition that he is six feet high. The truth is, however, that the word is ambiguous,— that under its seeming unity there lurks a real dualism of meaning, as a few facts will show.

In the first place, one of the most obvious tests of strength is the power of exertion. But great power of exertion may co-exist with extreme delicacy of organism, and even with organic disease. Napoleon, who slept four hours and was on horseback twenty,— who toiled so terribly that he half-killed his secretaries,— underwent fatigues that would have broken down nine out of ten "strong" men; yet his digestion was always delicate and easily deranged, and he died of an hereditary organic disease at the age of 55. Julius Cæsar was not what is popularly called a "strong" man; yet he was a prodigy of exertion and endurance. Again: it is a striking fact that great power of exertion in one direction does not always imply its existence in another. There are hundreds of men who can perform tasks that severely tax the muscles, and endure with impunity all kinds of exposure and hardship, who collapse under a continuous and severe strain upon the eyes, the brain, and the

nerves; and the converse is as often seen. Dr. Elam, the author of that deeply interesting work, "A Physician's Problems," tells us that not long ago a friend reviewed with him the names of six or eight upper wranglers at the English Universities for the last twenty years, and that, with *very* few exceptions, these and nearly all the "double first" men were alive and well; while, on the other hand, on reviewing the history of two boats' crews of picked men, of whom they had full and accurate information, they found that not one of them was alive. Surely, such havoc as this was never found among mental athletes.

Again, while there is a recognized limit to physical endurance, the limit to mental toil or strain is by no means so well defined. A man may saw wood, plough the earth, or lay brick, until he is physically exhausted, and can do no more; but the limit of mental labor is far less evident. Look at the amount of work which that dwarf, hunchback, and invalid,— that "drop of pure spirit in cotton wool,"— Alexander Pope, contrived to perform! When he got up in the morning, he had to be sewed up in stiff canvass stays, without which he could not stand erect. His thin body was wrapped in fur and flannel, and his meagre, spectral legs required three pairs of stockings to give them a respectable look. Almost literally a pigmy in size, he was so deformed that his life was one long disease. Look at brave Samuel Johnson, so feeble as a child that the physician said he never knew another raised with such difficulty,— struggling all his life with a severe scrofulous disorder, that twisted his body into strange contortions, and with a constitutional depression and hypochondria, "a vile melancholy,"

that kept him, as he said, "mad half his life, or at least, not sober,"—so languid at times that he could hardly tell the hour on the clock, and yet, with one pair of hands and one brain, doing the work of an academy! In spite of his exhausting labors and still more exhausting diseases, he lived to the age of seventy-five. See, again, the giant labors performed by Channing, with his frail, clayey tabernacle; and note the vast amount of writing and other useful work performed by those physical ghosts of men, Professor Goddard, of Brown University, and the late Professor Hadley, of Yale! Need we add to these the cases of Torstenson, the Swedish General, who, afflicted with gout, had to be borne on a litter, yet by the rapidity of his movements astonished Europe; or that of General Wolfe, who, though the seeds of several fatal diseases were laid in his constitution from infancy, yet wrested from the French the Gibraltar of America; or that of Palmerston, who, according to Sir Henry Holland, under a fit of gout which would have sent other men groaning to their couches, used to continue his work of reading or writing on public business almost without abatement, amid the chaos of papers which covered the floor as well as the tables of his room?

But, some one will ask, has that spectral-looking lawyer, or that statesman, who apparently performs such prodigies of labor,—that pale, lean man with a face like parchment, and nothing on his bones,—a constitution? We answer in the words of the London "Times" to a similar query some years ago,—"Yes, he has; he has a working constitution, and a ten times better one than you, my good friend, with your ruddy face, and strong, muscular frame. You *look*, indeed, the very picture of health, but you have, in reality,

only a sporting constitution, not a *working* one. You do very well for the open air, and get on tolerably well with fine, healthy exercise, and no strain on your brain. But try close air for a week,—try confinement, with heaps of confused papers, blue books, law books, or books of reference to get through, and therefrom extract liquid and transparent results, and you will find yourself knocked up and fainting, when the pale, lean man is—if not 'as fresh as a daisy,' which he never is, being of the perpetually cadaverous type,—at least as unaffected as a bit of leather, and not showing the smallest sign of giving way. There are two sorts of good constitutions,—good idle constitutions, and good working ones."

Another test of strength is the power of enduring hardship, touching which we see repeated the paradox we have already noted. Far from being associated invariably with great muscular force, this power is often found in union with extreme delicacy of organization. Who, in catastrophes and seasons of great peril, has not seen frail, delicate women, who would scream and almost faint at the sight of a mouse, bear up under toils, perils, and sufferings which would kill the stoutest men? Who has forgotten the lignum-vitæ toughness of Dr. Kane? Though a sailor by profession, he never went to sea without suffering from sea-sickness; he had a heart disease and a chronic rheumatism; yet he had a vitality,—an iron endurance,—which enabled him to go through sufferings in the Arctic Seas under which big, burly sailors, and other men specially trained to endure such hardships, sank into the grave. William III, of England, was not a strong man, nor was Luxemburg, his fiery opponent in the Netherlands. A Greek educator would have deemed it an abuse of the

medical art to cherish the flickering flame of life in either of them. Yet it is doubtful whether among the two hundred thousand men whom they commanded, there was one with greater power of endurance than that of the hunch-backed dwarf that led the fiery hosts of France, or that of the asthmatic skeleton that conducted the stubborn troops of England.

In thinking of the ideal of humanity,—the great man,—we almost always picture him as a noble bodily presence, full of health and vigor, and with a mind as healthy and vigorous as its abode. Yet how often is this notion contradicted by the facts! In what mean and unsightly caskets have some of the rarest and most potent essences of nature been enclosed!

Among the tests of strength, longevity must be considered one; and here we are confronted by facts that make the explanation of "strength" still more difficult. Dr. Elam cites the names of twenty-five celebrated thinkers, than whom none have ever exerted a greater influence upon literature, history, and philosophy, who lived to the average age of ninety years. Yet many of them, it is well known, were prodigious workers and voluminous authors, and not a few of them, there is reason to believe, would be regarded by our modern physical-culture men as weaklings. One of them, Galen, wrote three hundred volumes, and lived nearly a century; another, who had a very feeble constitution, and wrote seven or eight hours daily,—Lewis Cornaro,—reached a full hundred years. On the other hand, Dr. Winship, the leading apostle of "muscular Christianity" in this country, who at one time could lift a weight of three thousand pounds, died at the age of forty-two. Ascertain the united ages of twenty-five of the most eminent farmers the world has seen, and is it probable that

the sum total would amount, as in the case of these thinkers, to twenty-two hundred and fifty years?

It is customary, where a seemingly feeble man, tortured with disease, shows a durability or toughness which an athletic man lacks, outliving and outworking him, to explain the mystery by saying that the former has "a better constitution" than the latter. But does this solve the riddle? Evidently not. It simply gives it another name. What is that thing which, for convenience, or to hide our ignorance, we call "constitution," which may be constantly impaired, but has the ability to withstand so many shocks? It has been well observed by a thoughtful writer that "a table would not be called strong if two of its legs were cracked and several of its joints loose, however tough might be its materials, and however good its original workmanship. But if the table showed a power of holding together and recovering itself, notwithstanding every sort of rough usage, it might well be called strong, though it was ultimately broken up; and its strength might not unnaturally be measured by the quantity of ill-usage which it survived. It is precisely in *this power of self-repair* that the difference between a body and a mere machine resides. The difficulty of saying what is meant by physical strength is in the difficulty of distinguishing between the mechanical and what, for fault of a better word, must be called the vital powers of the body. Look upon the body as a machine, and the broken arm, the tubercles in the lungs, or the cancer in the liver, prevent you from calling it strong; but, if it goes on acting for years, and wonderfully recovering itself again and again from the catastrophe which these defects tend to produce, there must be a strong something somewhere. What and where is that something?"

PROFESSORSHIPS OF BOOKS AND READING.*

THE value of books as a means of culture is at this day recognized by all men. The chief allies and instruments of teachers, they are the best substitutes for teachers, and, next to a good college, a good library may well be chosen as a means of education. Indeed, a book is a voiceless teacher, and a great library is a virtual university. A literary taste is at once the most efficient instrument of self-education and the purest source of enjoyment the world affords. It brings its possessor into ever-renewing communion with all that is noblest and best in the thought of the past. The winnowed and garnered wisdom of the ages is his daily food. Whatever is lofty, profound, or acute in speculation, delicate or refined in feeling, wise, witty, or quaint in suggestion, is accessible to the lover of books. They enlarge space for him and prolong time. More wonderful than the wishing cap of the Arabian tales, they transport him back to former days. The orators declaim for him and the poets sing. He becomes an inhabitant of every country, a contemporary of all ages, and converses with the wisest, the noblest, the tenderest, and the purest spirits that have adorned humanity. All the sages have thought and have acted for him;

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or, rather, he has lived with them; he has hearkened to their teachings; he has been the witness of their great examples; and, before setting his foot abroad in the world, has acquired the experience of more countries than the patriarchs saw.

The most original thinkers have been most ready to acknowledge their obligations to other minds, whose wisdom has been hived in books. Gibbon acquired from his aunt "an early and invincible love of reading, which," he declared, "he would not exchange for the treasures of India." Doctor Franklin traced his entire career to Cotton Mather's "Essays to Do Good," which fell into his hands when he was a boy. The current of Jeremy Bentham's thoughts was directed for life by a single phrase, "The greatest good of the greatest number," caught at the end of a pamphlet. Cobbett, at eleven, bought Swift's "Tale of a Tub," and it proved what he considered a sort of "birth of intellect." The genius of Faraday was fired by the volumes which he perused while serving as an apprentice to an English bookseller. One of the most distinguished personages in Europe, showing his library to a visitor, observed that not only this collection, but all his social successes in life, he traced back to "the first franc he saved from the cake shop to spend at a bookstall." Lord Macaulay, having asked an eminent soldier and diplomatist, who enjoyed the confidence of the first generals and statesmen of the age, to what he owed his accomplishments, was informed that he ascribed it to the fact that he was quartered, in his young days, in the neighborhood of an excellent library, to which he had access. The French historian Michelet attributed his mental inspiration to a single book, a Virgil, he lived with for some years; and he tells us that

an odd volume of Racine, picked up at a stall on the quay, made the poet of Toulon. "If the riches of both Indies," said Fenelon, "if the crowns of all the kingdoms of Europe, were laid at my feet, in exchange for my love of reading, I would spurn them all." Books not only enrich and enlarge the mind, but they stimulate, inflame, and concentrate its activity; and though without this reception of foreign influence a man may be odd, he cannot be original. The greatest genius is he who consumes the most knowledge and converts it into mind. What, indeed, is college education but the reading of certain books which the common sense of all scholars agrees will represent the science already accumulated?

A well-known American writer says that books are only for one's idle hours. This may be true of an Emerson; but how many Emersons are there in the reading public? If the man who gets almost all his information from the printed page, "needs a strong head to bear that diet," what must be the condition of his head who abstains from this aliment? A Pascal, when his books are taken from him to save his health, injured by excessive study, may supply their place by the depth and force of his personal reflection; but there is hardly one Pascal in a century. Wollaston made many discoveries with a hatful of lenses and some bits of glass and crystal; but common people need a laboratory as rich as Tyndall's. To assume that the mental habits which will do for a man of genius will do for all men who would make the most of their faculties, is to exaggerate an idiosyncrasy into a universal law. The method of nature, it has been well said, is not ecstasy, but patient attention. "There are two things to be considered in the matter of inspiration; one is, the infinite

God from whom it comes, the other the finite capacity which is to receive it. If Newton had never studied, it would have been as easy for God to have revealed the calculus to his dog Diamond as to Newton. We once heard of a man who thought everything was in the soul, and so gave up all reading, all continuous thought. Said another, 'If all is in the soul, it takes a man to find it.'" It is true that, as Ecclesiasticus tells us, "a man's mind is sometimes wont to tell him more than seven watchmen that sit above in a high tower"; but it is also true that the man will hear most of all who hearkens to his own mind and to the seven watchmen besides.

No doubt books, like every other blessing, may be abused. "Reading," as Bacon says, "makes a full man"; and so does eating; but fullness, without digestion, is dyspepsia, and induces sleepiness and flabbiness, both fatal to activity. The best books are useless, if the book-worm is not a living creature. The mulberry leaf must pass through the silkworm's stomach before it can become silk, and the leaves which are to clothe our mental nakedness must be chewed and digested by a living intellect. The mind of the wise reader will react upon its acquisitions, and will grow rich, not by hoarding borrowed treasures, but by turning everything into gold. There are readers whose wit is so smothered under the weight of their accumulations as to be absolutely powerless. It was said of Robert Southey that he gave so much time to the minds of other men that he never found time to look into his own. Robert Hall said of Dr. Kippis that he piled so many books upon his head that his brains could not move. It was to such *helluones librorum*, or literary anacondas, who are possessed by their knowledge, not possessed of it, that

Hobbes of Malmesbury alluded, when he said that had he read as many books as other men, he would have known as little. There is in many minds, as Abernethy complained of his, a point of saturation, which if one passes, by putting in more than his mind can hold, he only drives out something already in. The history of competitive examinations shows that the kind of knowledge gained by cramming is painfully evanescent; it melts away with lack of use, and leaves nothing behind. It was one of the advantages of the intellectual giants of old, that the very scantiness of their libraries, by compelling them to think for themselves, saved them from that habit of intellectual dependence,—of supplying one's ideas from foreign sources,—which is as sure to enfeeble the thinking faculty as is a habit of dram-drinking to enfeeble the tone of the stomach. But though books may be thus abused, and many fine wits, like Dr. Oldbuck's, "lie sheathed to the hilt in ponderous tomes," will any man contend that such abuse is necessary? The merely passive reader, who never wrestles with his author, may seem to be injured by the works he peruses; but in most cases the injury was done before he began to read. A really active mind will not be weighed down by its knowledge any more than an oak by its leaves, or than was Samson by his locks. John Milton walked gracefully enough under the load of his immense learning; and the flame of Bishop Butler's genius was certainly not stifled by the mass of books he consumed. Great piles of fuel, which put out the little fires, only make the great fires burn. If a man is injured by multifarious knowledge, it is not because his mind does not crave and need the most various food, but because it "goes into a bad skin." His learning is mechanically, not chemically,

united to the mind; incorporated by contact, and not by solution. The author of "Hudibras" tells us that the sword of his hero sometimes

> "—ate into itself for lack
> Of somebody to hew or hack."

and there is reason to believe that the mind may be as fatally enfeebled by turning perpetually upon itself, and refusing all help or impulse from abroad, as by burying itself among books, and resting upon the ideas of other men. There are drones in cells as well as in libraries.

Such being the value of books, how can the college student better spend his leisure time, beyond what is required for sleep, meals, bodily exercise, and society, than in reading? But what books shall he read, and how shall he read them? Shall he let his instincts guide him in the choice, or shall he read only the works which have been stamped with the approval of the ages? How may he acquire, if he lacks it, a taste for the highest types, the masterpieces, of literature? Are there any critical tests by which the best books may be known, and is there any art by which "to pluck out the heart of their mystery"? These questions, if he is a thoughtful young man, anxious to make the most of his time and opportunities, will confront him at the very threshold of his college life. Of the incompetency of most students to answer them for themselves, those persons who have watched them when drawing books from college libraries can have little doubt. Not to speak of the undergraduates who read merely for amusement, or of the intellectual epicures who touch nothing but dainties, nibbling at a multitude of pleasant dishes without getting a good meal from any,—how few, even of the laborious and conscientious students who would economize their pre-

cious moments, read wisely, with definite purpose or plan! How many, ignorant that there is a natural order of acquirement,— that, for young readers, biography is better than history, history than philosophy, descriptive poetry than metaphysical,— begin with the toughest, the most speculative, or the most deluding books they can find! How many, having been told that the latest works in certain departments of knowledge are the best, plunge at once into Mill, Spencer, Buckle, Darwin, and Taine!— books pre-eminently suggestive to well-trained minds, but too difficult of digestion for minds not thoroughly instructed. There is, perhaps, no more frequent folly of the young than that of reading hard, knotty books, for the sake of great names,— neglecting established facts in science, history, and literature to soar into regions where their vanity is flattered by novel and daring speculations.

Again, how many students read books through by rote, without interest or enjoyment, without comprehending or remembering their contents, simply because they have been told to read them, or because some great man has profited by them! Who has not seen young men plodding wearily through bulky volumes of history or science, utterly unsuited to their actual state of development, under the delusion that they were getting mental strength and illumination, when, in fact, they were only inflaming their eyes and wasting their precious time? An heroic freshman, full of enthusiasm, and burning to distinguish himself by some literary conquest, fancies that it would be "a grand thing" to possess himself of universal history, and so he attacks the history of the world, in seven volumes, by M. Charles Rollin. He plods through Hume, Gibbon, Robertson, and other "works which no gentle-

man's library should be without," journeying over page after page with incredible patience, and with a scrupulous attention to notes, and, in rare cases, to maps, that is morally sublime. No tome is too thick for him, no type too small; whether the author is luminous or voluminous, it is all the same to him. Years pass, perhaps the young man graduates, before the truth flashes upon him that the object of reading is not to know books, but things; that its value depends upon the insight it gives; and that it is no more necessary to remember the books that have made one wise than it is to remember the dinners which have made one strong. He finds that instead of enriching and invigorating his mind he has taken the most effectual course to stultify it. He has crammed his head with facts, but has extracted from them no wisdom. He has mistaken the husks of history for the fruit, and has no more assimilated his heterogeneous acquisitions than a millstone assimilates the corn it grinds. The corn wears out the millstone, giving it a mealy smell; and the books have worn out the student, giving him only the faintest odor of intellectual culture and discipline. Almost every college has its literary Calvin Edsons,— living skeletons that consume more mental food than the strong and healthy, yet receive from it little nourishment,— remaining weak and emaciated on much, while the man of sound constitution grows vigorous on little.

The difficulties of deciding what books to read are greatly multiplied in our day by the enormous number of volumes that weigh down the shelves of our libraries. In the National Library at Paris it is said there are 800,000 separate volumes, or, according to a late writer's estimate, 148,760 acres of printed paper! The library of the British

Museum, which contains over 700,000 separate volumes, is said to have forty miles of book shelves. And yet the largest library in the world does not contain over a quarter part of the books that have been printed since the time of Gutenberg and Fust, while new books are flying from the press as thick as snowflakes on a wintry day. Five thousand new publications are issued in a year in England, and it has been ascertained that over ten thousand works, including maps, or a million volumes, are poured forth annually from the press of Germany alone. The Leipsic catalogue contains the names of fifty thousand German authors, and it is estimated that the time will speedily come when the number of German writers will exceed that of German readers. What reader is not appalled by such statistics? Who can cope with even the masterpieces of literature, to say nothing of the scientific and theological works, whose numbers are increasing in geometrical ratio? Steel pens and steam-presses have multiplied the power of production, and railways hurry books to one's door as fast as printed; but what has increased the cerebrum and the cerebellum? The two lobes of the human brain are not a whit larger to-day than when Adam learned his *ab's* and *eb's* in the great book of nature. The spectacles by which we may read two books at once are yet to be invented. De Quincey calculates that if a student were to spend his entire life from the age of twenty to eighty in reading only, he might compass the mere reading of some twenty thousand volumes; but, as many books should be studied as well as read, and some read many times over, he concludes that five to eight thousand is the largest number which a student in that long life could hope to master. What

realms of books, then, must even the Alexanders of letters leave unconquered! The most robust and indefatigable reader who essays to go through an imperial library cannot extract the honey from one-twentieth of this hive; though he read from dawn to dark, he must die in the first alcoves.

It is true that, in another view, the facts are not quite so discouraging. Newton said that if the earth could be compressed into a solid mass, it could be put into a nutshell; and so, if we could deduct from the world of books all the worthless ones and all those that are merely repetitions, commentaries, or dilutions of the thoughts of others, we should find it shrunk into a comparatively small compass. The learned Huet, who read incessantly till he was ninety-one, and knew more of books perhaps than any other man down to his time, thought that if nothing had been said twice, everything that had ever been written since the creation of the world, the details of history excepted, might be put into nine or ten folio volumes. Still, after all deductions have been made, the residuum of printed matter which one would like to read is so great as to be absolutely terrifying. The use of books is to stimulate and replenish the mind, to give it stuff to work with,—ideas, facts, sentiments; but to be deluged with these is as bad as to lack them. A mill will not go if there is too little water, but it will be as effectually stopped if there is too much. The day of encyclopædic scholarship has gone by. Even that ill-defined creature, "a well-informed man," is becoming every year more and more rare; but the Huets and the Scaligers,—the Bacons, who "take all knowledge to be their province," and the Leibnitzes, who presume "to drive all the sciences abreast,"—must soon become as

extinct as the megatherium or the ichthyosaurus. The most ambitious reader who now indulges in what Sydney Smith calls the foppery of universality, speedily learns that no individual can grasp in the limits of a lifetime even an elementary knowledge of the many provinces of old learning, enlarged as they are by the vast annexations of modern discovery; and, like Voltaire's little man of Saturn, who lived only during five hundred revolutions, or fifteen thousand of our years, he complains, as he closes his career, that scarcely has he begun to pick up a little knowledge before he is called on to depart.

For all these reasons we cannot but think that our colleges, while they provide the student with libraries, should also provide him with a professor of books and reading. It is not enough to introduce him to these quarries of knowledge; he should also be taught where to sink his shafts and how to work them. Mr. Emerson, speaking of such a professorship in one of his later essays, says: "I think no chair is so much wanted." Even the ripest scholar is puzzled to decide what books he shall read among the myriads that clamor for his attention. What, then, must be the perplexity of one who has just entered the fields of literature! If in Bacon's time some books were "to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested," how much greater must seem the necessity of discrimination at this day, when the amount of literary pabulum has quadrupled and even quintupled! Is there not then an absolute necessity that the student who would economize his time and make the best use of his opportunities, should be guided in his reading by a competent adviser? Will it be said that, according to the theory of a collegiate education, the

studies of the curriculum will demand all his time; that he will have no spare hours for general culture? We reply that, as a matter of fact, whatever the theory, in no college does the student, as a rule, give his whole time to the regular lessons, however long or difficult. Unless very dull or poorly prepared, the student does find time to read,—often several hours a day,—and he is generally encouraged to do so by the professors. The question, therefore, is not whether he shall concentrate all his time and attention upon his text-books, but whether he shall read instructive books, for a definite purpose and under competent direction, or shall acquire, without direction, the merest odds and ends of knowledge.

We live in a day when it is the practice in every calling to utilize things which were once deemed valueless. In some of the great cities of Europe even the sweepings of the streets are turned to account, being sold to contractors who use them as dressing for farms. In the United States Mint at Philadelphia the visitor to the gold room notices a rack placed over the floor for him to walk on; on inquiring its purpose, he is told that it is to prevent the visitor from carrying away with the dust of his feet the minute particles of precious metal which, in spite of the utmost care, will fall upon the floor when the rougher edges of the bar are filed, and that the sweepings of the building save yearly thousands of dollars. How much more precious are the minute fragments of time which are wasted by the young, especially by those who are toiling in the mints of knowledge! Who can estimate the value to a college student of this golden dust, these raspings and parings of life, these leavings of days and remnants of hours, so valueless

singly, so inestimable in the aggregate, could they be gleaned up and turned to mental improvement! Let us suppose that a young man, on entering college, economizes the odds and ends of his time so far as to read thoughtfully twelve pages of history a day. This would amount, omitting Sundays, to about three thousand seven hundred pages, or twelve volumes of over three hundred pages each, in a year. At the end of his college course he would have read forty-eight volumes,—enough to have made him master of all the leading facts, with much of the philosophy, of history; with the great, paramount works of English literature; with the masterpieces (in translations) of French, German, Spanish, and Italian literature, and with not a little of the choicest periodical literature of the day. What a fund of knowledge, of wisdom, and of inspiration would these forty-eight volumes, well chosen, well understood, and well digested, be to him! What a quickening, bracing, and informing study would even one great book prove! The histories of Hallam, Grote, Merivale, Mommsen, Milman, Macaulay, Motley; Clarendon's gallery of portraits, Gibbon's great historic painting; any one of these might date an epoch in the student's intellectual life. The thorough, conscientious study of any masterpiece of literature, Dr. Johnson thought, would make a man a dangerous intellectual antagonist. Over and above all this, the student would have formed habits of self-improvement and of economy in the use of his time which would be of more value than his acquisitions, and would influence his whole life.

In saying this we do not forget that it is not well for the intellectual worker to be always in the harness, or to be a slave to the clock. We have no sympathy with

those persons who, with a pair of compasses, divide the day into portions, alloting one portion and no more to one thing, and another portion to another, and who think it a sin to lose a minute. On the contrary, we believe there is a profound truth in the saying of Tillier that "le temps le mieux employé est celui que l'on perd." Much of our education, even of our best education, is acquired, not only out of school, but out of the study, in the hours which morbid or mechanical workers consider lost. Deduct from our acquisitions all that is learned in seemingly idle hours, in times of recreation and social intercourse, and the residuum would be a heap of bones without flesh to cover them. Making, however, all deductions for necessary rest and relaxation, we still believe there are few students who cannot find time to read twelve pages a day. Are there not many who through ignorance of what to read, and how to read, and even of the chief advantages of reading, waste double this time?

Will it be said that it is enough for the student to read a few choice authors,—to absorb thoroughly a half-dozen or more representative books,—and that these he can select for himself? No doubt there are advantages in thus limiting one's reading. So far as reading is not a pastime, but a part of the systematic cultivation of the faculties, it is useful only so far as it implies close and intimate knowledge. The mind should be not a vessel only, but a vat. A man may say that he has read Milton's minor poems, if he has skimmed over them lightly as he would skim over the columns of a newspaper, or if he dispatches them as a person boasted that he had gone through a geometry in one afternoon, only skipping the A's, and B's, and crooked lines that seemed to have

been thrown in to intercept his progress; but he has not read them to any good purpose until they have fascinated his imagination and sunk into his memory. Really great books must be read and re-read with ceaseless iteration, must be chewed and digested till they are thoroughly assimilated, till their ideas pass like the iron atoms of the blood into the mental constitution; and they hardly begin to give weight and power to the intellect, till we have them so by heart that we scarcely need to look into them. It is not in the number of facts one has read that his intellectual power lies, but in the number he can bring to bear on a given subject, and in his ability to treat them as data, or factors of a new product, in an endless series.

It is hardly possible to censure too sharply what Sir William Hamilton calls "the prevailing pestilence of slovenly, desultory, effeminate reading." A great deal of the time thus spent is but the indulgence of intellectual dram-drinking, affording a temporary exhilaration, but ultimately emasculating both mind and character. The Turk eats opium, the Hindoo chews tobacco and betel nut, the civilized Christian reads; and opium, tobacco, and books, all alike tend to produce that dizzy, dreamy, drowsy state of mind which unfits a man for all the active duties of life. But true as all this is, "the man of one book," or of a few books, is, we fear, a Utopian dream rather than a reality, in this nineteenth century. The young man who has a keen, vigorous appetite for knowledge, and who would be abreast with his age, will never be content to feed on a few choice authors, even though each be a library. He knows that as the Amazon and the Mississippi have hundreds of tributaries, so

it is with every great stream of knowledge. He sees that such are the interrelations and overlappings of science that, to know one subject well, it is necessary to know something of a thousand others. He recognizes, sooner or later, the fact that, as Maclaurin says, "our knowledge is vastly greater than the sum of what all its objects separately could afford; and when a new object comes within our reach, the addition to our knowledge is the greater the more we already know; so that it increases, not as the new objects increase, but in a much higher proportion." Above all, he knows that, as in our animal economy it is a disastrous policy to eat exclusively the nitrates which contribute to the muscles, the phosphates which feed the brain and nerves, or the carbonates which develop fat, so we starve a part of our mental faculties if we limit our mental diet to a few dishes. The intellectual epicure who would feed on a few choice authors is usually the *laudator temporis acti*,—the indiscriminate eulogist of the past; and this, of itself, renders worthless all his recipes for mental culture, and cuts him off from the sympathy of the young. He is forever advising them to read only classic authors, which would be to live in an intellectual monastery. It is quite possible to feed a young man with too concentrated a diet. It has been truly said by a wise teacher that if there is one law more sure than another in intellectual development, it is that the young must take their start in thought and in taste from the models of their own time; from the men whose fame has not become a tradition, but is ringing in clear and loud notes in the social atmosphere around us.

There are some persons, no doubt, who are opposed to all guidance of the young in their reading. They would

turn the student loose into a vast library and let him browse freely in whatever literary pastures may please him. With Johnson they say, "Whilst you stand deliberating which book your son shall read first, another boy has read both; read anything five hours a day, and you will soon be learned." Counsel, advice in the choice of books, they condemn as interfering with the freedom of individual taste and the spontaneity which is the condition of intellectual progress. "Read," they say to the young man, "what you can read with a keen and lively relish; what charms, thrills, or fascinates you; what stimulates and inspires your mind, or satisfies your intellectual hunger; 'in brief, sir, study what you most affect.'" No doubt there is a vein of wisdom in this advice. It is quite possible to order one's reading by too strict and formal a rule. A youth will continue to study only that in which he feels a real interest and pleasure, constantly provoking him to activity. It is not the books which others like, or which they deem best fitted for him, that he will read and read with profit, but the books that hit his tastes most exactly and that satisfy his intellectual cravings. No sensible educator will prescribe the same courses of reading for two persons, or lay down any formal, cast-iron rules for the direction of the mental processes. That which is the most nutritious aliment of one mind may prove deleterious and even poisonous to another.

To some extent, too, the choice of books may be left to individual taste and judgment. There will be times when, under the attraction of a particular subject, or the magnetism of a particular author, it may be advisable to break away from the prescribed list, and follow the thoughtful promptings of nature. That must be a sorry

tameness of intellect that feels no impulse to get out of the groove of even the most judicious course of reading. Again, there are some minds that have an eclectic quality which inclines them to the reading they require, and in a library they not only instinctively pounce upon the books they need, but draw at once from them the most valuable ideas as the magnet draws the iron filings scattered through a heap of sand. But these are rare cases, and can furnish no rule for general guidance. To assert that a learned and judicious adviser cannot help the ordinary student in the choice of books, is to assert that all teaching is valueless. If inspiration, genius, taste, elective affinities are sufficient in the selection and reading of books, why not also in the choice of college studies? Why adopt a curriculum? The truth is, the literary appetite of the young is often feeble, and oftener capricious or perverted. While their stomachs generally reject unwholesome food, their minds often feed on garbage and even poison. The majority of young persons are fond of labor-saving processes and short cuts to knowledge, and have little taste for books which put much strain upon the mind. The knowledge too easily acquired may impart a temporary stimulus and a kind of intellectual keenness and cleverness, but it brings no solid advantage. It is, in fact, "the merest epicurism of intelligence,—sensuous, but certainly not intellectual." Magnify as we may the necessity of regarding individual peculiarities in education, it is certain that genius, inspiration, or an affinity for any kind of knowledge, does not necessarily exclude self-knowledge, self-criticism, or self-control. As another has said: "If the genius of a man lies in the development of the individual person that he is, his man-

hood lies in finding out by study what he is, and what he may become, and in wisely using the means that are fitted to form and perfect his individuality."

Will it be said that there are manuals or "courses of reading," such as Pycroft's, or President Porter's excellent work, by the aid of which an undergraduate may select his books without the aid of a professor? We answer that such manuals, while they are often serviceable, can never do the work of a living guide and adviser. Books can never teach the use of books. No course of reading, however ideally good, can be exactly adapted to all minds. Every student has his idiosyncrasies, his foibles, his "stond or impediment in the wit," as Bacon terms it, which must be considered in choosing his reading-matter, so that not only his tastes may be in some degree consulted, but "every defect of the mind may have a special receipt."

Will it be objected to our plan, that a vast majority of American colleges are ill endowed, and cannot afford to have a Professorship of Books and Reading, however desirable? We reply that such a chair, *specially endowed*, is not indispensable; but that its duties, in the smaller colleges, might be discharged by the professor of English Literature, or by an accomplished librarian.

But, it may be asked, what are the qualifications, and what will be the duties, of such a literary *gustator* and guide? We reply that a professor of books and reading should be a man of broad and varied culture, with catholic tastes, a thorough knowledge of bibliography, especially of critical literature, and much knowledge of men: one who can readily detect the peculiarities of his pupils, and who, in directing their reading, will have constant reference to these as well as to the order of nature and

intellectual development. While he may prepare, from time to time, courses of reading on special topics, and especially on those related to the college studies, he will be still more useful in advising the student how to read most advantageously; in what ways to improve the memory; how to keep and use commonplace books; when to make abstracts; and in giving many other hints which books on reading never communicate, and which suggest themselves only to one who has learned after many years of experience and by many painful mistakes the secret of successful study. He will see that the young men who look to him as their guide read broadly and liberally, yet care "*multum legere potiùs quam multa.*" He will see that they cultivate "the pleasure grounds as well as the corn fields of the mind"; that they read not only the most famous books, but the best reputed current works on each subject; that they read by subjects, and not by authors; perusing a book not because it is the newest or the oldest, but because it is the very one they need to help them on to the next stage of their inquiries; and that they practice subsoil plowing by re-reading the masterpieces of genius again and again. Encouraging them to read the books they "do honestly feel a wish and curiosity to read," he will teach them to discriminate, nevertheless, between true desire, the monition of nature, and that superficial, false desire after spiceries and confectioneries, which, as Carlyle says, is "so often mistaken for the real appetite, lying far deeper, far quieter, after solid nutritive food"; and, discouraging short cuts in general, he will yet often save the student days of labor by pointing out some masterly review article in which is condensed into a few pages the quintessence of many volumes.

Perhaps one of the greatest services which such a teacher might perform for the undergraduate would be in showing him how to economize his reading,—how to transfer or inspirit into his brain the contents of a good book in the briefest time. At this day, the art of reading, or at least one of the arts, is to skip judiciously,—to omit all that does not concern us, while missing nothing that we really need. Some of the best thinkers rarely begin a book at the beginning, but dive right into the middle, read enough to seize the leading idea, dig out the heart of it, and then throw it by. In this way a volume which cost the author five years of toil, they will devour at a night's sitting, with as much ease as a spider would suck the juices of a fly, leaving the wings and legs in the shape of a preface, appendix, notes, and conclusion for a boiled joint the next day. It is said that Patrick Henry read with such rapidity that he seemed only to run his eye down the pages of a book, often to leap over the leaves, seldom to go regularly through any passage; and yet, when he had dashed through a volume in this race-horse way, he knew its contents better than anybody else. Stories similar to this of "the forest-born Demosthenes" are told of some of his contemporaries. Wonders are recounted of their powers of perusal; how Johnson would swoop down upon his prey like the eagle, and tear out the heart of a book at once; how Burke, reading a book as if he were never to see it again, devoured two octavo volumes in a stage-coach; and how package after package of these sweet medicines of the mind were thrown in to Napoleon on the island of St. Helena, like food to a lion, and with *hoc presto* dispatched. It is said that Coleridge rarely read a book

through, but would plunge into the marrow of a new volume, and feed on all the nutritious matter with surprising rapidity, grasping the thought of the author, and following out his reasonings to consequences of which he had never dreamed.

Chief-Justice Parsons, of Massachusetts, who, according to Chief-Justice Parker, "knew more law than anybody else, and knew more of other things than he did of law," read books with a similar rapidity, taking in the meaning not by single words but by whole sentences, which enabled him to finish several books in a single evening. Thierry, the historian, tells us of himself that from the habit of devouring long pages in folio, in order to extract a phrase and sometimes one word among a thousand, he acquired a faculty which astonished him,—that of reading in some way by intuition, and of encountering almost immediately the passage that would be useful to him,—all the vital power seeming to tend toward a single vital point. Carlyle devours books in the same wholesale way, plucking out from an ordinary volume "the heart of its mystery" in two hours. It is absurd, of course, to suppose that every man,—above all, that young men,—will be able with profit to dash through books as did these great men; but all students can be taught how, by practice, to come nearer and nearer to such a habit. It is a miserable bondage to be compelled to read all the words in a book to learn what is in it. A vigorous, live mind will fly ahead of the words of an author and anticipate his thought. Instead of painfully traversing the vales of commonplace, it will leap from peak to peak on the summit of his ideas. Great quickness, acuteness, and power of concentration are required to do this; but it is

a faculty susceptible of cultivation and measurably attainable by all. The first thing to be learned by every student is *how* to read. Few know how, because few have made it a study. Many read a book as if they had taken a *sacramentum militare* to follow the author through all his platitudes and twaddle. Like the American sloth, they begin at the top of the tree, and never leave it till they have devoured all of which they can strip it, whether leaves or fruit. Others read languidly, without re-acting on the author or challenging his statements, when the pulse should beat high, as if they were in battle and the sound of the trumpet were in their ears. We are told by Dr. O. W. Holmes, who was a classmate of the late Dr. H. B. Hackett, that when the latter was at Phillips Academy, Andover, he "fastened his eyes upon a book as if it were a will making him heir to a million." A reader who is thus enthusiastic, and knows the secret of his art, will get through a book in far less time, and master it more thoroughly than another, who, ignorant of the art, has plodded through every page.

THE MORALITY OF GOOD LIVING.

THE science of cookery, which has so long been neglected by Americans, is beginning at last to provoke their attention. The labors of Professor Blot mark an epoch in our dietetic history. In lectures and magazine essays he has taught us how to eat, and, as pre-essential to it, how to roast, fry, and boil; and the lessons are of vital importance to our health and vigor as a people. Englishmen and Americans have too long regarded the art and mystery of cooking with contempt, as beneath the dignity of a cultivated, high-minded man. But good cookery is only another name for economy, health, temperance and longevity; and what can be more inconsistent than to require a diploma of the man who professes to cure the diseases caused by vile cookery, and to regard him as eminently respectable, and yet to allow quacks and empirics,—the most slovenly and uninstructed persons in the community,—to create them?

That a man's energy, happiness, and even goodness, are dependent more or less upon his bodily condition, and consequently upon the condition of his stomach, few persons at this day will hesitate to admit. "A sound mind in a sound body" is a condition, not only of healthy intellectual, but of healthy spiritual life. Hippocrates went so far as to assert that all men are born with equal capacity, and that the mental differences in men are owing to the different kinds of foods they consume, a theory which was very

plausibly illustrated by the late Mr. Buckle. A man of the kindliest impulses has only to feed upon indigestible food for a few days, and forthwith his liver is affected, and then his brain. His sensibilities are blunted; his uneasiness makes him waspish and fretful. He is like a hedgehog with the quills rolled in, and will do and say things from which in health he would have recoiled. Dr. Johnson said truly that "every man is a rascal when he is sick;" and Sydney Smith did not exaggerate when he affirmed that "old friendships are often destroyed by toasted cheese, and hard salted meat has often led to suicide." Who does not know that a nervous headache, an attack of dyspepsia, a rheumatic pain, even so trifling a thing as a cold in the head, will often convert the most amiable of men into a bull-dog? Even so intellectual a man as William Hazlitt, writing to his lady-love, could say: "I never love you so well as when I think of sitting down with you to dinner, on a boiled scrag-end of mutton and hot potatoes." The most blissful hours of domestic life are those most pervaded by the element of domesticity; and no prudent wife will despise the additional charm added to the soothing effects of her presence by the influence of "a boiled scrag-end of mutton and hot potatoes." Who does not know that one of the secrets of begging favors successfully is to ask for them immediately after dinner. Many a man, who, before meal-time, would not give a sixpence for any purpose, will, post-prandially, talk with unction of the miseries of our race, and hand over his greenbacks without grumbling. The same person that at eleven o'clock A.M. repulsed a missionary with icy indifference, and almost laughed the world's conversion to scorn, will sing Heber's hymn with feeling, and almost

shed tears over the benighted condition of the Hottentots and Kickapoos, at three in the afternoon. Is there a lobbyist at Washington who is ignorant of the fact that his "little bill" is more clearly apprehended by a legislator after his one or two o'clock meal; or is there a wife who doubts that the way to a man's heart is through his stomach? "He had not dined," says Shakspeare of Coriolanus; and to the flatulence and acerbity thus caused in the hero's stomach Menenius ascribes his rejection of the prayers of Rome:

> "*He had not dined;*
> The veins unfilled, our blood is cold, and then
> We pout upon the morning, are unapt
> *To give* or to forgive; but when we have stuffed
> These pipes, and these conveyances of our blood,
> With wine and feeding, we have *suppler souls*
> Than in our priest-like fasts."

The truth that man is half-animal has too often been ignored by divines and moralists. The health which is dependent upon a good digestion has much more to do with a man's piety than has generally been supposed. Every minister of the Gospel has to grapple with cases of conscience which baffle all ordinary spiritual treatment, and which turn out at last to be simply cases of physical disorder whose remedy is in the pharmacopeia, or more frequently in the larder or cook-book. Constitutional, hereditary, and occasional diseases are constantly at work, modifying men's opinions, feelings, and practices. Dr. Mason, of New York, used to say that the grace that would make John look like an angel, would be only just enough to keep Peter from knocking a man down. If the house of this tabernacle be shattered, and in constant need of props and repairs, its sympathetic tenant is apt to be like its crazy dwelling-place. There are only two

bad things in this world, said Hannah More,—sin and bile. Was she ignorant that a large part of the sin springs from bile?

The doctrine that health has a great deal to do with godliness may not be very flattering to our pride; but we must accept our natures, as the transcendentalist did "the universe," and, accepting them, we must bow to the plain fact that a ladder reaching to Heaven must, if we are to climb it, have its feet upon the ground; and that, to reach to the highest degree of spiritual excellence, we must begin with physical and mental soundness. It is an indubitable truth that a man not only reasons better, but loves more warmly, gives more generously, and prays more fervently, when well than when ill. A man of unquestionable piety once said that he could not worship God until he had eaten his breakfast. It is equally true that a man who is well fed, clothed, and housed is a more amiable being than one who lacks the comforts of life. A man before dinner may talk scandal or write scathing criticism; may crawl like a horse-fly over the character or the writings of a neighbor; but, after he has well eaten and drunken, the thing is an impossibility. There is something in a generous meal that exorcises the devils of disparagement and calumny, and substitutes therefor the spirits of good-fellowship and philanthropy. It may be doubted whether half of the suicides, murders, heresies, false philosophies, and apostacies that have stained the annals of our race, have not had their origin remotely in a disordered stomach. Voltaire affirms that the massacre of St. Bartholomew was primarily due to the utter incapacity of the King to digest his food. Had Josephine been a good cook, perhaps history might have been spared

one of its saddest scandals. It is not the "fat, sleek-headed man," but the "lean and hungry Cassius" that is dangerous.

As a moral institution, therefore, dinner cannot be too highly valued; but it has also its intellectual aspects. Even the literature of a nation, and its intellectual development generally, are more or less dependent on its cookery. It is easy to assert that the mind of an author should be independent of his physique,—that, being the nobler part of the man, it ought to rise superior to the trammels imposed on it by the body, or external influences. Your stout, robustious persons, with nerves of whip-cord and frames of cast iron, cannot understand why the delicate, sensitive frame of the child of genius should be "servile to every skyey influence," as Shakspeare calls it; or why a man who earns his bread and butter by scribbling on foolscap, should not be able to dash off Iliads, Divine Comedies, and Hamlets at all times and seasons, just as another man wields the broad-axe, handles the pitchfork, or shoves the jack-plane. It is, nevertheless, a stubborn fact with which literary men are only too familiar, that the flow and quality of a man's ideas may be affected by even such vulgar and commonplace things as victuals. The elder Kean understood so well the physiological and psychological effects of diet, that he regularly adapted his dinner to his part; he ate pork when he had to play tyrants; beef for murderers; boiled mutton, for lovers. "Are you not afraid of committing murder after such a meal?" inquired Byron of Moore, on seeing him occupied with an underdone beefsteak. Had Shakspeare lived on corned beef and cabbage, he might have produced the monster Caliban, but he

could never have conceived the delicate Ariel; and had Milton lived on pork and beans, ten chances to one he would have introduced the hog into his description of Paradise. M. Esquiros, an acute Spanish writer, in speaking of the English diet, expresses the opinion that beer, the national drink, has inspired the English poets, their artists, and their great actors:—"The English," he adds, "attribute to the use of this liquid the iron muscles of their laboring classes, who struggle so valiantly, afloat and ashore, in factories and vessels, for the power of Great Britain: they even attribute their victories to it. 'Beer and wine,' an orator exclaimed at a meeting where I was present, 'met at Waterloo: wine red with fury, boiling over with enthusiasm, mad with audacity, rose thrice against that hill on which stood a wall of immovable men, the sons of beer. You have read history: beer gained the day.'"

Be this doctrine true, or the opposite, that "he who drinks beer thinks beer," the conclusion still follows that a man's thinking is more or less affected by his food. Some of the most anomalous events in history, including great political revolutions, have had their origin in the disordered stomachs of kings and statesmen. The finest poets and prose writers that have charmed the world by their pens, have been mentally prostrated by a fit of indigestion; and generals who have proclaimed their preëminence at the cannon's mouth have been rendered powerless by a badly-cooked dish. Could we know the full history of all victories, ancient and modern, we should probably be amazed to find how important a part in the destiny of Empires has been played by the gastric juice. The fears of the brave, as well as the follies of

the wise, may often be resolved into an overtaxed biliary duct. Napoleon lost a battle one day because his *poulet à la Marengo* was inconsiderably scorched by his *chef-de-cuisine*. Indigestion, caused by his fast and voracious mode of eating, paralyzed him in two of the most critical events of his life,—the battle of Borodino and the battle of Leipsic,—which he might have converted into decisive and commanding victories had he pushed his advantages as he was wont. On the third day of Dresden, too, the German novelist, Hoffman, who was present in the town, asserts that the Emperor would have won far more brilliant successes but for the effects of a shoulder of mutton stuffed with onions. It was owing in a great degree to the wretched condition of their commissariat that the Austrians were defeated at Austerlitz. *C'est la soupe qui fait le soldat.*

"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we may die," is a motto which has often been denounced, and most justly, by the Christian moralist. "Let us eat and drink well, lest to-morrow we die," would be a good substitute. The pleasures of the table are not the highest form of human enjoyment, it is true; but for all that, an oyster-pie is a good thing when well made. "A man," says Dr. Johnson, "who has no regard for his stomach, will have no regard for anything else." We fully agree with the great moralist, and we subscribe no less heartily to the saying of the French magistrate, of whom regenerated France, according to Royer-Collard, has so much reason to be proud,* who declared that the discovery of a new dish is more important than the discovery of a new star, because there never can be dishes enough, but there are

* M. Henrion de Pensey, President of the Court of Cassation.

stars enough already. Justly did Talleyrand inveigh against the English, that they had one hundred and fifty forms of religion, and but one sauce,— melted butter. It is a mistake to suppose that only brainless men, with full paunches and empty pates, have a keen relish for the luxuries of the table,— that, as Shakspeare says,

"— Dainty bits
Make rich the ribs, but bankrupt quite the wits."

The celebrated scholar, Dr. Parr, confessed a love for "hot lobsters, with a profusion of shrimp sauce." Pope was a decided epicure, and would lie in bed for days at Bolingbroke's, unless he were told that there were stewed lampreys for dinner, when he would rise instantly and hurry down to table. Cleopatra is said to have owed her empire over Cæsar as much to her suppers as to her beauty; and who can tell how much the love of the *Grand Monarque*, Louis XIV, for Madame de Maintenon, was owing to the invention of the immortal cutlets which bear her name? Henry VIII was so grateful to the inventor of a dish whose flavor he relished, that he gave him a manor. Cardinal Wolsey was conciliated by the good dishes on the Field of the Cloth of Gold; and Agrippina won Claudius by a recipe for dressing Spanish onions. Handel ate enormously; and, when he dined at a tavern, always ordered dinner for three. On being told that all would be ready as soon as the company should arrive, he would exclaim: "Den bring up de dinner, prestissimo. I am de company."

It is said that Cambacérès, second consul under the French republic, and arch-chancellor under the empire, never, under any circumstances, suffered the cares of government to distract his attention from "the great object of life,"— a good dinner. Being detained, on one occasion,

when consulting with Napoleon, beyond the appointed hour of dinner, he betrayed great symptoms of restlessness and impatience. At last he wrote a note, which he called a gentleman usher in waiting to carry. Napoleon, suspecting the contents, nodded to an aide-de-camp to intercept the despatch. As he took it, Cambacérès begged earnestly that his majesty would not read a trifling note on family matters. Napoleon persisted, and found it to be a note to the chancellor's cook, containing only these words: "*Gardez les entremets,—les rôtis sont perdus.*"

It is sometimes said that "plain living and high thinking" should be the motto of the scholar. The plain fact is, that, of all laborers, none more imperiously need a nutritious diet than the toilers with the brain. If there is any system of living which they should hold in horror, it is the bran-bread and pea-soup philosophy inculcated by Graham, Alcott and Co., and practised upon by nervous people, valetudinarians, and others, who are continually scheming how to spin out the thread of a miserable, sickly existence, after all their capacities of pleasure and enjoyment have passed away. These profound philosophers take special pains to show that there is nothing but disease lurking in all the delicacies of ocean, earth, and air, which Heaven has blessed us with. All the piquant dishes which lie so temptingly on the well-spread table, to tickle the palate of the epicure, are, according to their view, impregnated with a subtle poison. One produces flatulency, another acidity; beef is stimulating, ham is bilious, pork is scrofulous, fish is indigestible, pastry is dyspeptic, tea is nervous; and so on, from the simplest article of diet to the most complicated effort of gastronomic skill.

It is a little amusing that, while these ascetic philoso-

phers declaim so vehemently against the good things of this life, and predict an early grave for every man who makes a hearty, careless, miscellaneous meal, they are generally perfect amateurs in physic, and swallow all sorts of quack medicines and similar abominations with infinite relish. It is true that the theories of the bran-bread philosophers have received some countenance from a few distinguished writers, particularly Dr. Franklin and the poet Shelley, who seem to have thought that, by living wholly upon vegetable food, we may preserve our physical and intellectual faculties in a state of much higher perfection. But it is evident, in spite of such speculations, that man is a carnivorous animal, and must, once a day at least, be fed with flesh, fowl, or fish; he cannot make a satisfactory repast off the roots and fruits of the earth; for, though

> "—— His anatomical construction
> Bears vegetables in a grumbling sort of way,
> Yet certainly he thinks, beyond a question,
> Beef, veal, and mutton easier of digestion."

Franklin, indeed, was not a very zealous convert to the Grahamite doctrines. He hesitated for some time what course to pursue, till, at last, recollecting that, when a cod had been opened, some small fish had been found in its stomach, he said to himself: "If you eat one another, I see no reason why we may not eat you."

There was much good sense in the remark of a sainted Archbishop of York, who was very fond of roast goose, that so good a thing was not designed specially for sinners. Not less wise was the reply of Saint Thomas à Becket to a monk, who, seeing him eating a pheasant's wing with much relish, affected to be scandalized, saying that he thought Thomas a more mortified man. "Thou art but a ninny,"

said the Archbishop; "knowest thou not that *a man may be a glutton upon horse-beans;* while another may enjoy with refinement even the wing of a pheasant, and have Nature's aid to enjoy what Heaven's bounty gave?"

In advocating a due regard for the pleasures of the table, we commend no wanton profusion. There is a medium between the abstemiousness of the anchorite or the indifference of a Newton, who sometimes inquires whether he has dined, and the senseless profusion of a Cæsar who devoured at a meal the revenue of several provinces, or of those other Romans who had single dishes composed of five hundred nightingales' tongues, or the brains of as many peacocks. The dinners of a people,— their coarseness or refinement, their profusion or scantiness,— are an unerring index of the national life. There is, indeed, as another has said, a whole geological cycle of progressive civilization between the clammy dough out of which a statuette might be moulded, and the brittle films that melt upon the tongue like flakes of lukewarm snow. In the early years of the French Revolution it was said to be impossible to understand that movement unless one dined at Barrère's. It is France that leads the rest of the world in civilization; and it is in France that the art of gastronomy has been carried to the last limit of perfection. In what other country did ever a *maître d'hôtel* stab himself to the heart because he could not survive the dishonor of his employer's table? Yet thus did Vatel, the cook of the great Condé, because on a great occasion the sea-fish failed to arrive some hours before it was to be served; thus showing, as Savarin has said, that the fanaticism of honor can exist in the kitchen as well as in the camp, and that the spit and the saucepan have also their Deciuses and their Catos.

While giving due honor to the French, we must not forget that they were indebted to the Italians for the germinal ideas, the fundamental principles, of the great science of which they are the acknowledged masters. It was in Italy that the revival of cookery, as well as the revival of learning, first began; and from that country the science of gastronomy was introduced into the land of Savarin and Soyer, by the artists that accompanied Catherine de Medicis. When Montaigne visited the land of Horace and Virgil, he was deeply impressed by the formal and weighty manner in which the cook in the service of Cardinal Caraffa spoke of the secrets of his art. "He discoursed to me," says the old Gascon, "of the *science de gueule* with a gravity and magisterial air, as if he was speaking of some weighty point of theology."

To conclude, the cook may not rank very high in the scale of humanity; but on the other hand it requires no great stretch of imagination to foresee that, should ever the bran-bread system come in fashion, "living skeletons" would cease to be a wonder; Calvin Edsons would meet us at every corner; a man of eighty or ninety pounds would be a monster of corpulency; and, ere many centuries could elapse, the human species would gradually dwindle into nothingness, and vanish from the earth.

THE ILLUSIONS OF HISTORY.

IT is said that when in 1751 a bill was introduced into the British Parliament for the reform of the calendar by passing at once from the 18th of February to the 1st of March, it met with fierce opposition. Lord Macclesfield, the President of the Royal Society, warmly advocated the bill; and when three years afterward his son was a candidate for Parliament in Oxfordshire, one of the most vehement cries raised against him was,—"Give us back the eleven days we have been robbed of!" When Mr. Bradley, the mathematician, another advocate of the bill, was dying of a lingering illness, the common people with one voice ascribed his sufferings to a judgment from Heaven for having taken part in that "impious undertaking."

Something like this is the feeling of many persons in regard to the havoc made with their idols by modern historical criticism. One of the most painful moments in the experience of a student is when, after having spent years in acquiring a knowledge of the past,—in building painfully, brick by brick, an edifice of historical learning,—a doubt suggests itself whether the whole structure does not rest on sandy foundations. Beginning his researches with belief that "facts are stubborn things," or, as the Scotch poet has it, that

> "Facts are chiels that winna gang,
> And daurna be disputed."

he too often ends with the melancholy conviction that "nothing is so fallacious as facts, except figures." That

compiled histories, like those of Hume and Gibbon, written by persons not concerned in the events, should abound in errors, is not strange; but it does startle us to be told that original memoirs, describing what men profess to have seen with their own eyes, or to have gathered from the lips of the actors themselves, are scarcely less likely to misrepresent the facts than derived history. If we may not implicitly believe Robertson, Froude, and Macaulay, shall we not credit Clarendon, Burnett, and Sully? Yet modern investigation has shown that in the latter class of writers falsifications, exaggerations, and distortions of fact, are nearly as frequent as in the former.

Who is not familiar with the despairing exclamation of Sir Walter Raleigh, on vainly trying to get at the rights of a squabble which he had witnessed in the court-yard of the Tower, in which he was imprisoned? Two gentlemen had entered the room, and given him conflicting, and, as he thought, untrue accounts of the brawl. "Here am I," he cried, "employed in writing a History of the World,— trying to give a just account of transactions many of which occurred three thousand years ago,— when I cannot ascertain the truth of what happens under my window!" So the Duke of Sully tells us that, after the battle of Aumaule, Henry IV, being slightly wounded, conversed familiarly with some of his officers touching the perils of the day; "upon which," says the Duke, "I observed, as something very extraordinary, that, amongst us all who were in the chamber, there were not *two* who agreed in the recital of the most particular circumstances of the action."

Doubtless differences like these result from the different stand-points of the observers, just as two or more observers behold each a different rainbow, since the sun's rays are

not reflected in the eyes of any two persons exactly in the same angle. Yet the rainbows are mainly the same, and so it may be with the differences of historians. But what if the discrepancies are *essential*, so as fundamentally to vary the whole statement? What if the witnesses are weak in intellect, dull of perception, dishonest, prejudiced, or deeply interested to give a lying account of the whole affair? Have we all of Cæsar's blunders in his Commentaries,—all of Napoleon's in his Memoirs? Who shall tell us of the true character of the Inquisition? Read Protestant historians, and you see an engine of devilish cruelty; read De Maistre, and in an instant all history is upturned, and all your convictions subverted. You find it to be a mild and beneficent institution, founded upon the same rock of eternal truth and justice as martyrdom, love and heroic sacrifice. Who, again, shall tell us what was the real character of John Graham, of Claverhouse? How shall we decide between the two views which history presents to us,—on *this* panel, the butcher and the assassin; on *that*, the heroic leader, with a rare genius for war,—the politic and tolerant statesman, with a rare capacity for civil organization?

It may be thought that a historian living many ages after the events he portrays is guarded against error by the fact that he can judge calmly and philosophically of men and their acts; that he can sift the statements of contemporary chroniclers, balancing one misstatement against another, and thus ascertain the precise amount of truth. But by what rule is he to decide among a variety of conflicting statements? By what hair-balance is he to ascertain the exact amount of weight to be given to each? Knowing that, as Boileau says, "*Le vrai n'est pas toujours*

le vraisemblable," that Truth often lacks verisimilitude,— shall he declare that to be true which looks the most probable? Again: is it quite certain that distance from the events guards the historian against prejudice? Is there not too much ground for the sarcasm of Rev. F. W. Robertson, that history, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, is merely Mr. Hume's or Mr. Gibbon's theory, substantiated by a dry romance, until Mr. Somebody else comes and writes the romance in *his* way, the facts being pliable and equally available for both?

What are Mitford's and Thirlwall's Histories of Greece but elaborate and disguised party pamphlets, demonstrating, the one aristocratical principles from Grecian history, the other democratical principles from precisely the same facts? Or what is Alison's History but Mr. Wordy's account of the French Revolution, in twenty volumes, written to show that Providence was always on the side of the Tories? What Abbott's Life of Napoleon, but a demonstration from the very same facts that the hero of Austerlitz was a great philanthropist, who immolated self on the altar of humanity? What is Macaulay's so-called History but an ingenious and masterly piece of special pleading, designed to show that James II was a miscreant unworthy to live, while the asthmatic skeleton, his successor, an obstinate, hard-headed, uninteresting Dutchman, with a bull-dog tenacity of purpose, had, like Berkeley, "every virtue under heaven?" Has not Mr. Froude shown that the facts of history are ductile, and can be manipulated so as to establish any desired theory,— even theories the most opposite? What, indeed, is the spirit of past ages, as preserved in most histories, "but the spirit," as Faust said to the student, "of this or that good gentle-

man in whose mind those ages are reflected?" All the events of the past come to us through the minds of those who recorded them; and they, it is plain, are neither machines nor angels, but fallible beings, with human passions and prejudices. Iron is iron in all its forms, but the sulphate of iron will always differ from the carbonate of iron. Smith and Brown may be equally anxious to give us the facts of the past, without change or coloring; but the Smithate of history will, nevertheless, always differ from the Brownate of history. With the self-same facts, by skillful selection and suppression, "you may have your Hegel's philosophy of history, or you may have your Schlegel's philosophy of history; you may prove that the world is governed in detail by a special Providence, or you may prove that there is no sign of any moral agent in the universe, except man; you may prove that our fathers were wiser than we, or you may prove that they were fools; you may maintain that the evolution of humanity has been a ceaseless progress toward perfection, or you may maintain that there has been *no* progress, that the race has barely marked time; or, again, that men were purest in primeval simplicity, when

"'Wild through the woods the noble savage ran.'"

In days of old there were historians who avowedly wrote as they were bribed. It was said of Paulus Jovius that he kept a bank of lies. To those who paid him liberally he assigned a noble pedigree and illustrious deeds; those who gave nothing he vilified and blackened. He claimed that it was the historian's privilege to aggravate or extenuate faults, to magnify or depreciate virtues, —to dress the generous paymaster in gorgeous robes, and the miserly magnate in mean apparel. Many later

historians, who would have scorned Jovius's fees, have not hesitated to copy his practices,— heightening the portraits of some, and smearing the faces of others, as the Duchess of Marlborough, in a fit of rage, did the portrait of her daughter, declaring that she was now as black without as within.

What a tissue of falsification are many of the so-called histories of England! What lies have they perpetuated concerning the patriots of the Commonwealth and the age of Charles I! So outrageously have they misrepresented the facts and the principles of those times, that even De Quincey, a churchman and a Tory, expresses his disgust, and affirms that the clergy of the Church of England have been in a perpetual conspiracy since the era of the Restoration to misrepresent both. "There is not a page of the national history, even in its local subdivisions, which they have not stained with the atrabilious hue of their wounded remembrances." Of Cromwell's administration, the most glorious in English annals, they have given, he affirms, so mendacious a picture, that Continental writers have actually believed that Oliver was a ferocious savage, who built his palace of human skulls, and that his major-generals of counties were so many *Ali Pachas*, who impaled or shot a dozen prisoners every morning before breakfast, or, rather, so many ogres that ate up good Christian men, women and children alive.

Perhaps no historian ever piqued himself more on his judicial equanimity than David Hume. It was a favorite boast of his, that his first account of the Stuarts was free from all bias, and that he had held the balance between Whig and Tory with a delicate and impartial hand. Yet, that his prejudices powerfully warped his

mind, so as to render him altogether unsafe as a historian, few can doubt. Ten years after the first publication of his work, irritated by the outcry against him "for presuming," as he expresses it, "to shed a generous tear for the fate of Charles the First and the Earl of Stafford," he avenged the censure by recasting his historical verdicts, so as to render them offensive to the party that had attacked him. Among his intimate friends at Edinburgh was an old Jesuit, who, like most of the order, was a scholar and a man of taste; and to his criticism, as the parts were finished, the MS. was submitted. Just after the publication of Elizabeth's reign, the priest chanced to turn over the pages, and was astonished to find on the printed page sins of the Scottish queen that had never sullied the written one. Mary's character was the exact reverse of what he had found it in the manuscript. Seeking the author, he asked the meaning of this. "Why," replied Hume, "the printer said he would lose £500 by that story; indeed, he almost refused to print it; so I was obliged to alter it as you saw."

But what truth could be expected of a historian who wrote lying,—on a sofa? Nothing can surpass the exquisite ease and vivacity of Hume's narration; the charm of the style which Gibbon despaired of imitating, is familiar to all. But the Scottish historian was too indolent to trouble himself about accuracy. Instead of applying his powerful critical faculty to sift truth out of tradition, he repeats legendary and half-mythological stories with the same air of belief as the well-authenticated events of modern times. Essentially a classicist of the Voltaire and Diderot school, he despised too heartily the barbarous monkish chroniclers to think of going

through the drudgery of examining their writings, and winnowing the grains of fact they contain from the chaff of superstition and imaginative detail. We need not be surprised, therefore, that the searching investigation to which his history was subjected some years ago by George Brodie brought to light so many departures from truth, both wilful and unintentional. "Upon any question of *fact*," says De Quincey, himself, like Hume, a Tory, "Hume's authority is none at all."

Even had Hume struggled against his indolence and his prejudices, there is one source of error which he could not have avoided. In condensing a narrative from the old chroniclers, and giving the pith of their statements in modern phraseology, the historian almost invariably gives us a new and different story. The events, characters, all the features of the time, undergo a kind of translation or paraphrase, which materially changes their character and gives a false impression to the reader, — an impression as false as that which Dryden has given of Chaucer by his attempts to modernize the old bard. Every one knows how completely the aroma, the *bouquet* of the old poet,— the sly grace of his language,— the exquisite tone of *naiveté*, which, like the lispings of infancy, give such a charm to his verse,— have evaporated in the process of transfusion into more modern language. Words and ideas are so mystically connected,— so connatural,— that the modernization of an old author is substantially a new book. It is not the putting of old thoughts into a new dress; it is the substitution of a new *thought*, more or less changed from the original type. Language is not the dress of thought; it is the *incarnation* of thought, and it controls both the physiognomy and the organization of the idea it utters.

Even when Hume most unjustifiably perverts the truth of history, it is not usually by positively false statements. It is by suppression and exaggeration,— by gliding lightly over some parts, and scrutinizing others with microscopic eye and relentless severity,— that he commonly deceives the reader; a process by which it is easy to make a saint of Charles I, or a tyrant of William III. In the same manner the author of "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" has *Gibbonized* the vast tract over which he has traversed. Guizot and Milman have both compared Gibbon's work with the original authorities, and both, after the intensest scrutiny, pronounce him diligent and honest; but, as Mr. E. P. Whipple has observed, this by no means proves that he gives us the real truth of men and events. The qualities of the historian's character steal out in every paragraph; and the reader who is magnetized by his genius rises from the perusal of the vast work, informed of nothing as it was in itself, but of everything as it appeared to Gibbon, and especially doubting two things,— that there is any chastity in women, or any divine truth in Christianity. "He writes," says Macaulay, "like a man who had received some personal injury from Christianity, and wished to be revenged on it and all its professors." It is not, however, by what he expressly says, that he misleads the reader, but by what he hints and insinuates. Of all the writers who have "sapped a solemn creed" with irony, he is the most consummate master of the art of sneering. As Archbishop Whately has well said, "his way of writing reminds one of those persons who never dare look you full in the face." Never openly attacking Christianity, advancing no opinions which he might find it difficult to

defend, he yet contrives to leave an *impression* adverse to the idea of its divine origin. Its rapid spread is accounted for by secondary causes, and the evidences upon which it rests are indirectly classed in the same category with the mythologies of paganism. Through two chapters an insidious poison is distilled, and yet, so skilfully is it mixed, that it would be difficult to put one's finger on a single passage which the historian could not defend as consistent with the faith of the most orthodox believer.

"No man should write history," says Montaigne, "who has not himself served the State in some civil or military capacity." By this is meant that only a man of action, one versed in affairs, can judge fairly the conduct of men of action, the man of books being almost sure to judge men according to some fanciful theory, which he has adopted in his chimney corner, of what they might and ought to be, and not practically, according to what they really are. Besides this, there is yet another source of error against which the most conscientious historian finds it difficult to guard. It is that which Guizot calls the aptness to forget *moral chronology*,—to overlook the fact that history is essentially successive. "Take the life of any man," he observes,—"of Oliver Cromwell, of Cardinal Richelieu, of Gustavus Adolphus; he enters upon his career; he pushes forward in life, and rises; great circumstances act upon him; he acts upon great circumstances. He arrives at the end of all things, and then it is we know him. But it is in his whole character; it is as a complete, finished piece; such in a manner as he is turned out, after a long labor, from the workshop of Providence. Now at his outset he was not what he thus became; he was not completed, not finished, at any single moment of his life; he was formed

successively. Men are formed morally as they are physically. They change every day. . . . The Cromwell of 1650 was not the Cromwell of 1640. . . . This, nevertheless, is an error into which a great number of historians have fallen. When they have acquired a complete idea of a man, have settled his character, they see him in the same character throughout his whole career. With them it is the same Cromwell who enters Parliament in 1628, and who dies in the palace of Whitehall thirty years afterwards." Who can doubt that this mistake is a fruitful source of erroneous judgments? How often are public men,—especially usurpers and despots,—treated as if they had contemplated at the outset of their career the goal which they reached at last! It has been well said that Cromwell followed little events before he ventured to govern great ones; and that Napoleon never sighed for the sceptre until he gained the truncheon, nor dreamt of the imperial diadem until he had first conquered a crown. It is only by degrees that a man attains to the pinnacles of influence and power; and often none of those who gaze at the height to which he has risen are more astonished at his elevation than himself.

That Macaulay succeeded better than Hume is doubtless true; but in some respects he signally failed. That he was far from being impartial, few, even of his admirers, will deny. He was a brilliant advocate, rather than a calm and discriminating judge. The most superficial reader cannot be blind to his more palpable prejudices, such as his intense dislike of the Quakers,—his almost bitter hatred of the Duke of Marlborough, which led him to paint his character in the blackest ink,—and his idolatry of William III, which led him to palliate all the king's

faults, even his faithlessness to his wife. But the historian had graver faults. To the height of the great argument of Puritanism he never rose. Cool, moderate, unenthusiastic in temperament, his genius exactly fitted him to portray the reign of Queen Anne. The poets and the politicians of that age he could thoroughly gauge; and his picture of that brilliant group of versatile, witty, corrupt, and splendid gentlemen would have been drawn with a masterly hand. But his hand faltered when he had to register grander passions and darker conflicts. The world, as Macaulay viewed it, was a very commonplace world. He did not brood over the mysteries of being, like Carlyle. His idea of the universe was essentially a Parliamentary one; and men with him are mainly Whigs and Tories. Nothing can surpass his historical pictures in pomp and splendor; they are woven into a grand and imposing panorama, and every figure, too, is finished, down to the buttons and the finger nails. But it is the accidents, rather than the realities of things, that he paints. To use a scholastic phrase, he sees the qualities, not the quiddities, of men. He never gets to their *core*. The heroes of the Commonwealth, and their motives of action,—the spiritual pains, the stormy struggles, which tore England asunder in the seventeenth century,—he never comprehended. His plummet could not fathom them; they lay beyond the reach of his even temperament and unimpassioned intellect, and set his measured antitheses at defiance. The strongest, richest, most unconventional, most original characters, become, when he touches them, comparatively insipid and tame.

Macaulay's style, vivid, picturesque, and condensed, is almost perfect of its kind. His short, quick periods, it

has been well said, fall upon the ear like the rapid firing of a well-served battery. But the very splendor of his style is often its chief fault. The temptation to write epigrammatically,— to employ strong contrasts,— sometimes overmasters his judgment. He is too vehement and intense to be safe. There are whole pages in his history with hardly an adjective that is not super-superlative. The antithetical style, which by its salient contrasts is so well adapted to character-painting, does not lend itself readily,— at least when used in excess,— to the exact expression of facts. It is not strange, therefore, that even the most friendly critics of the Whig historian should have complained of his exaggeration. His characterizations are too extreme. He is always deepening the shadow and raising the light. To those he likes and to those he dislikes he gives more white and black than are due. Historical criticism with him was only a tribunal before which men were arraigned to be decisively tried by one or two inflexible tests, and then sent to join the sheep on the one hand, or the goats on the other. It is hard to believe that the hero of Blenheim, with all his avarice, was a moral monster, or that James II was a living contradiction because he risked his soul for the sake of his mistress, and risked his crown for the sake of his creed. Even when most dazzled by Macaulay's brilliant word-painting, we feel that we would gladly exchange the most Martial-like epigram and the most glittering antithesis for a description which, tickling the fancy less, might be nearer the truth.

Half of the lies of history have their origin in this desire to be brilliant,— to charm and surprise rather than to instruct. Historic truth is usually too complex,— too full of half-lights and faint shadows,— to admit of startling

contrasts. The world is not peopled with angels and devils, but with men. To say that Robespierre was a "logic-formula," with spectacles instead of eyes, and a cramp instead of a soul, as Carlyle has depicted him, and that, as he half suggests, if this "sea-green formula" had been sanguine and Danton bilious, there would have been no Reign of Terror, may be a vivid way of putting things; but we feel that the writer, in his effort to get below the husks and shells to the very souls of things, has falsified history as much by the excess of imagination as others by the lack of it.

It has been justly said that in humanity there is no such thing as a straight line or an unmixed color. You see the flesh color on the cheek of a portrait. The artist will tell you that the consummately-natural result was not attained by one wash of paint, but by the mixture and reduplication of a hundred tints, the play of myriad lights and shadows, no one of which is natural in itself, though the blending of the whole is. A man who lacks the historic instinct ignores all this. He seems to think that all moral distinctions are confounded, if Lucifer does not always wear a complete suit of black, and if there be a speck on Gabriel's wing. In painting his men and women, he assumes that they have but a few leading and consistent traits, and that these are always written in big and glaring type, like that employed by bill-stickers; whereas, the fact is, that all men act more or less from inexplicable motives, and resemble in some degree the poet Edgar A. Poe,—at night the hero of a drunken debauch, in the morning a wizard of song whose weird and fitful music is like that of the sirens.

"I believe that a philosopher," says Disraeli, "would

consent to lose *any* poet to regain an historian." No doubt, if the exchange were between a Massey and a Mommsen, a Tupper and a Tacitus; but what if the poet to be exchanged is a Homer or a Horace, a Shakspeare or a Milton? "Fancy," it is added, "may be supplied, but truth once lost in the annals of mankind leaves a chasm never to be filled." Unfortunately such a fancy as that of Dante or Milton cannot be made to order; it is the growth of centuries; while the truth of many "annals" is purely imaginary. Even fiction itself is often more truthful than history. The creations of the great epic poets embody truths of universal application; and for a vivid and life-like picture of the civil wars of England, you must go, not to the stiff and stately pages of Clarendon, but to a romance of De Foe's, which Lord Chatham, deceived by its naturalness, once quoted as history.

No one who has not compared the elegant and polished works of modern historians with the homely old chronicles on which they are based, would dream of the extent to which the facts have been tortured or metamorphosed. Not only are dry, naked facts amplified, so as to clothe the skeleton of history with flesh and blood, but chasms are filled up, and new facts added, to eke out the story, and make it more "sensational"; while the entire narration is often so clipped, and rounded off, and polished, that the original author, were he to rise from the dead, would not recognize his own offspring. These historians do as the wolf did with Baron Munchausen's horse, who began at the horse's tail, and ate into him, until the Baron drove home the wolf harnessed in the skin of the horse. It would be difficult to name a practice which

has been more fatal to the trustworthiness of history than this of filling up the chasms in the historian's information with conjecture. A Cuvier, from a bone, may reconstruct an antediluvian animal; but it is not so with the writer, who, from a few isolated facts, tries to supply a missing chapter in a nation's history. In one case there is a correlation of the known and the unknown facts, a law of typical conformity, which makes it easy to supply those that are wanting; in the other there is no analogy, and we are left to our guesses.

What shall we say of the latest historian of England, Mr. Froude? Few writers have recognized more fully than he, in theory at least, the difficulty, nay, impossibility, of being entirely just in our estimate of other ages. He confesses that in historical inquiries the most instructed thinkers have but a limited advantage over the most illiterate. Those who know the most,—whose investigations are the profoundest,—approach least to agreement. In the eyes of Hume, he reminds us, the history of the Saxon Princes is "the scuffling of kites and crows." Father Newman, on the other hand, would mortify the conceit of a degenerate England by pointing to the sixty saints and the hundred confessors who were trained in her royal palaces for the Calendar of the Blessed. How vast a chasm yawns between these two conceptions of the same era! "Again, the history of England scarcely interests Mr. Macaulay before the Revolution of 1788; and to Lord John Russell and Mr. Hallam the Reformation was the first outcome from centuries of folly and ferocity. Mr. Carlyle has studied the same subject with insight at least equal to theirs, and to him the greatness of English character was waning with the dawn of English literature.

The race of heroes was already waning; the era of action was yielding before the era of speech." Yet, in spite of these vivid examples of the difficulty of ascertaining the real facts of the past, and though Mr. Froude declares that he has been struck dumb with wonder at the facility with which men fill in gaps in their knowledge with guesses,— will pass their censures, as if all the secrets of the past lay out on an open scroll before them; and though he acknowledges that, wherever he has been fortunate enough to discover authentic explanations of English historical difficulties, he has rarely found any conjecture, either of his own or of any other modern writer, confirmed, yet even *he*, it seems, has not been able to avoid the errors of his predecessors; in his own words, "has not been able to leap from his shadow." He has been accused by able writers of making in his history partial and highly colored representations, of summarizing state papers in such a way as to read into them a meaning which does not exist in the originals; of throwing in words and phrases for which no equivalent can be found in the originals; of suppressing facts not suited to his theories; of dealing in innuendoes and exaggerations; and even of misquoting and entirely misrepresenting his authorities.

Again, popular opinion and the so-called "dignity of history" too often compel the writer to subordinate faithfulness to impression. Agesilaus must not hobble, nor the neck of Augustus be awry. Hannibal must not be one-eyed, nor Marshal Vendôme humpbacked; Suwarrow must be a giant in body as well as in intellect; Nelson, though dwarfish and lame, must stride the deck with the body, as well as the soul, of a hero; Washington

must always spell correctly, call "Old Put" General Putnam, and never swear, and never pitch an offending servant out of a window; and all the facts must lose their ugliness or grotesqueness, and have the smoothly clipped uniformity of a Dutch yew-tree.

Another of the banes of history is the necessity of finding out causes of sufficient dignity for its leading events. Half of the great movements in the world are brought about by means far more insignificant than a Helen's beauty or an Achilles' wrath. A grain more of sand, thought Pascal, in the brain of Cromwell,— one more pang of doubt in the tossed and wavering soul of Luther, —and the current of the world's history would have been changed. Who can conjecture what that history would have been, had Cleopatra's nose been shorter,— had the spider not woven its web across the cave in which Mahomet took refuge,— had Luther's friend escaped the thunderstorm,— had the Genoese, after the peace of Paris, not sold the petty island of Corsica to France? Accidents, too, mere accidents,— the bullet which struck Gustavus on the field of Lützen,— the chance by which the Russian lancers missed Napoleon in the churchyard of Eylan,— the chance which stopped Louis XVI in his flight at Varennes,— the death of Elizabeth of Russia, which, in the hour of Frederic the Great's despair, when he was almost overwhelmed by his enemies, broke the powerful combination against him,— turn the course of history as well as of life, changing alike the destinies of nations and of men. Sallust says that a periwinkle led to the capture of Gibraltar. "A chambermaid," wrote Chesterfield to his son, "has often made a revolution in palaces, which was followed by political revolution in

kingdoms; the subtlest diplomacy has sometimes been interrupted by a cough or a sneeze." Causes like these, which the sensational writer is fond of assigning, seem inadequate and disproportionate to the grave historian; and so he hunts about for weightier ones. He cannot believe that the expedition of Henry of Guise, who went in a herring-boat and made himself King of Naples, was merely the frolic of a hare-brained youth; and he deems it necessary to show a long train of important circumstances leading to the expedition.

Who, again, is not familiar with the rehabilitations of historical villains, which have become so fashionable with recent historians? Special monarchs or statesmen having been selected, whose pilloried bodies have been for centuries the favorite target for filth of every description, they have been subjected to a scrubbing process, by which all their vilest sins have been rubbed off them. Not only has Richard III been "reconstructed," so as to lose both his physical and his moral hump; not only has the Bluebeard of British history, Henry VIII, been transformed into almost a model husband, whose only fault was excessive uxoriousness; not only has "bloody Mary" lost nearly all her blood, except that running in her own veins; not only has Catiline, whom in our school-boy days we learned so to execrate, been whitewashed into a much-abused patriot; but even the bloody Borgias have been bleached; the Duke of Alva has been metamorphosed from a cruel and cold-blooded bigot into a "cool, moderate, far-seeing statesman"; Catherine de Medicis has been whitened; and Nero himself, the synonym of cruelty, will doubtless be proved to have been outrageously slandered; and some Froude or Niebuhr will yet show that,

when he fiddled while Rome was burning, he was only playing some "Dead March in Saul," or other funereal strain, as a safety-valve to his agonized feelings! But pray tell us,— if the verdicts of the past are to be thus unsettled, and this process is to go on till all the "crook-backed tyrants" of history shall have been physically and morally straightened, and its pages purified from all cut-throats,— as if our historians had resolved to imitate Canning's nice judge, who

> "Swore, with keen, discriminating sight,
> Black's not *so* black, nor white so *very* white,"

— how shall we know when the real truth, the "hard pan" of past events, has been reached, and that History, now so changeful, has made her final and irreversible statement, which shall render her worthy of her proud boast that she is "philosophy teaching by examples"?

Perhaps in the next generation the fashion will have changed to the opposite point of the compass. We may start with a hero, and conclude with a Nero; we may begin with a saint, and end with a scamp. Indeed, the disenchanting process has already begun. Have not the German moles, who have been burrowing in the Eternal City among its old manuscripts and tombstones, shown by a dull realistic philosophy that all its early history is a myth? Have they not squeezed the breath out of Romulus and Remus, and shown that the wolf-suckling story, which so charmed our boyhood, is a fable? Has not the famous conspiracy of the Sicilian vespers, which for ages has been the theme of song and story,— which has inflamed the imagination of all civilized nations through the dreams and embellishments of the novelist and the dramatist,— been lately shown to be no

conspiracy at all? Has not Mr. Aaron Goodrich, of Minnesota, just sought to sap our faith in Columbus by showing that he was a pirate, whose true name was Griēgo — that he got all his ideas of the New World from the Northmen and some shipwrecked Venetian sailors, who had discovered the American coast,— that he meanly claimed of Queen Isabella the reward of discovery, though one of his sailors in another vessel had first descried the land, and he had again and again been ready to give up the expedition in despair? Has not Mr. John Pym Yeatman just demonstrated,— to his own satisfaction, at least,— that the Normans never conquered England, but only came down from the mountains and from Brittany, and retook what was their own before? Have not Innes and Pinkerton cut out eight centuries from the history of Scotland, and, crueller still, knocked in the head fifty of her kings? Are we not told that Dion Cassius painted every man whom he disliked as black as Erebus, and that Suidas was accustomed "to invent a horrid death" for those whose doctrines he hated?

Have not the historical critics of Germany shown that the notion which so kindled our youthful enthusiasm, that Brutus stabbed Cæsar from patriotic motives, is an illusion,— that the actual fact was, that, it being the custom in old Rome for the nobles to lend money to the plebeians at fearfully usurious rates, Cæsar forbade this by a law, and was immediately afterwards butchered by the "noble" Brutus and his fellow conspirators; and that consequently all Akenside's fine poetry about Brutus's rising "refulgent from the stroke," is mere poetry, and nothing more? Have not Monsieur Dasent and Mr. Baring-Gould annihilated William Tell and his apple, by show-

ing that no mention of them was made in Switzerland till about two centuries after Tell's supposed time, and that the story is common to the whole Aryan race, as well as to the Turks and Mongols, who never heard of Tell, or saw a book in their lives? Has not England's patron saint been proved to be a low impostor, who got rich by fraud, theft, and the arts of a common informer, — turned religious adventurer, bribed his way to a bishopric, and, at last, upon being imprisoned for his crimes, was dragged out of jail, and lynched by an angry mob? Are we not all too familiar with the story of Amerigo Vespucchi, the pickle-dealer at Seville, who, though but a boatswain's mate in an expedition that never sailed, contrived to supplant Columbus, and to baptize half the earth with his own dishonest name?

Has any other department of history been so deluged with lies as that of saintly biography? Not to dwell upon the counterfeits and fabrications in mediæval and later literature, which the monks spent their leisure in making,— have we no brummagem saints in modern times? What American that has visited London has not learned to honor the name of Thomas Guy, who founded Guy's hospital, who gave away fabulous sums for benevolent purposes, and whose name stares at us in stone in sundry statues? Yet who and what was this Guy, when stripped of all his *guises?* Alas! for those who believe that the great secret of happiness is to preserve our illusions, this world-renowned philanthropist, whom the poor, crippled sailor so idolizes, was, if we may believe certain English writers, a clever stock-jobber, a miser, and a man who absolutely fattened on the wrongs of the poor cheated Jack Tars! At one time the English

sailors were paid, not in gold, but in paper, as inconvertible as our greenbacks. With these they were often forced to part at any discount which the money-changers chose to exact. The good Guy bought these tickets, and out of the profits became a millionaire.

Shall we add to all these instances of men whom history or biography has canonized, that of Sallust, denouncing in his elegant pages, with burning anger, the corruption of Rome and the extortion in its provinces, yet establishing his famous museum-gardens "with the gold and the tears of Numidia;" Pope Gregory VII, the haughtiest of pontiffs, entitling himself "the servant of the servants of God," at the very time when he expected that kings and emperors should kiss his toe and hold his stirrup; Francis I, the pink of chivalry, threatening to stab himself rather than sign a dishonorable treaty, and, on signing a treaty, declaring secretly to his counsellors his intention, on a miserable pretext, of breaking it; Jean Jacques Rousseau, invoking parental care for infancy, and sending his own children to a foundling hospital; Lord Bacon, holding with one hand the scales of justice, and with the other taking bribes; the great Duke of Marlborough, now acting history in minutes, and now dirtying his hands by peculation in army contracts,—the politest of men and the meanest; Lord Peterborough, the hero of Barcelona and the amateur cook, walking from market in his blue ribbon, with a fowl under one arm and a cabbage under the other; Algernon Sydney, one moment mouthing patriotism, and at another accepting bribes from France; the sentimental Sterne, weeping over a dead ass, and neglecting a living mother; Sheridan, firing off in the House of Commons impromptu jokes kept in pickle for months; the poet

Young, spending his best days in toadying and place-hunting, and in old age satirizing the pursuits in which he had failed,—draining the cup of pleasure to the dregs, and then turning State's-evidence against the world and its follies?

Shall we speak of the poet Thomson, singing the praises of early rising, and lying abed till noon; Woodworth, singing in his "Old Oaken Bucket" the praises of cold water, under the inspiration of brandy; Dr. Johnson, in his dictionary, defining *pension* as "pay given to a state hireling for treason to his country," and afterwards accepting from George III. a pension for himself; William Cobbett, denouncing the House of Commons as "a Den of Thieves," and afterwards putting himself forward as a candidate for admission into this thieving fraternity, and proudly taking his place as one of its members; Byron, dining at Rogers's on a potato and a little vinegar, and secretly stuffing like an anaconda,—sending £4,000 to Greece, and writing privately to a friend that "he did not see *how he could well have got off for less*,"—or sending a copy of his famous "Fare-thee-well" verses to Lady Byron, with a butcher's bill inclosed, with a slip like this, "I don't think we could have had so much meat as this;" George I, gaining by act of Parliament a crown to which he had no hereditary title, yet in his very first speech to that body talking of "ascending the throne of his *ancestors*"? But England (as some of our examples have shown) has no monopoly of what one of her writers has called "these humiliating humbugs of history;" we have but to cross the channel to find among her glory-loving neighbors others worthy to rank with a note-shaving Brutus, patriotic from private spite, or a Thomas Guy, ostentatiously giving to the seamen with one hand what he had squeezed out of them with the other.

"History," wrote Voltaire to a friend, "is, after all, nothing but a parcel of tricks we play with the dead." . . . "As for the portraits of men, they are nearly all the creations of fancy; 'tis a monstrous piece of charlatanry to pretend to paint a personage with whom you have never lived." Did the French historians think of this when they told the story of the *Vengeur?* Riddled in the sea-fight of June 1, 1794, by three English ships, the *Vengeur*, they tell us, began to fill. Her crew fought her lower tier of guns till the rising water poured forth through the ports; then, running to the next tier, they fired its guns till again the water drove them off. Then they took to the deck guns; and, at last, grouping, with arms stretched to heaven, and shouting *Vive la Republique!* their colors still flying, and *préférant la mort à la captivité*, they went down, the waters rolled over them, and all was over!

All this is very *magnifique*, and many a Frenchman's heart swelled as he thought that these men were his countrymen, till unfortunately, a letter of the French captain, written on the ship to which he had surrendered, was discovered, showing that the *Vengeur* had struck her colors, that her crew shrieked for help, that her captain and a good part of her men were taken from her, that she sank as a British prize, and that a British prize-crew went down with her. Notwithstanding these facts, Thackeray saw in the Louvre, in 1841, a great painting representing the *Vengeur* going down with colors flying, and fired upon by the British sailors in red coats; and now, to save the national honor, which is so much dearer than truth, the French captain's official letter is pronounced a forgery!*

* Admiral Griffiths, one of the survivors of the engagement, who was living in 1838, declares the French story to be "a ridiculous piece of nonsense." "Never," he says, "were men in distress more ready to save themselves." There was "not one shout beyond that of horror and despair."

Perhaps this method of getting rid of the facts was suggested to the French by the irony of Dean Swift: "I have always," says the Dean, "borne that laudable partiality to my own country which Dionysius Halicarnassus with so much justice recommends to an historian. I would hide the frailties and deformities of my political mother, and place her virtues and beauties in the most advantageous light."

Passing from the sea to the land, who has not read the glorious tale of the chivalry of Fontenoy? — how two regiments, French and English, approached on the hill, and the officers rode out from each front, bowing and doffing hats, while the gallant Hay cried, "Gentlemen of the French Guards, will you please to fire first?" — to which the Count d'Auteroche responds: "*We* never fire first." Now what were the facts? Few persons have read them, as stated by Carlyle in his Life of Frederic the Great, that the bowing was mockery, the polite speeches huzzahs, the chivalry mere "chaffing," and that the French *did* fire first, and that, too, without standing on the order of firing, but immediately on catching sight of the English, and without even waiting to say, "By your leave."

Leaving France, and coming nearer home, need we cite Commissioner Oulds' defence of Wirz, the pious jailor of Andersonville; how he proved him to be a hero of the noblest type, whose only foible was an excess of tenderness, and gave as a reason for this revelation "a desire to vindicate the truth of history"? Are we not all familiar with the thrilling story of Farragut, who, at the battle of Mobile Bay, lashed himself to the mast-head of his battle-scarred flagship, and thence signalled to his fleet

as he sailed by Forts Gaines and Morgan vomiting flame? The simple fact is, that the Admiral was *not* at the mast-head,— was *not* lashed,— did *not* go aloft to encourage his men or to signal from his position, but simply stepped into the main rigging to get a good view of the situation, as sings Mr. T. Buchanan Read:

> "High in the mizzen-shroud,
> (Lest the smoke his sight o'erwhelm,)
> Our Admiral's voice rang loud,—
> 'Hard a-starboard your helm!'"

And again:

> "From the main-top, bold and brief,
> Came the word of our grand old chief,—
> 'Go on!' 'Twas all he said,
> And the Hartford passed ahead.

So hard is it to get the facts touching what is going on to-day, and almost before our very eyes! "It is probable," says an able Scottish writer, "that *not one fact* in the whole range of history, original and derived, is truly stated." *

Had we space, it would not be difficult to show that many of the most striking incidents of history,— scenes and events which artists have been fond of depicting, and orators of citing,— are pure fiction. Such are the stories of Xerxes flogging the Hellespont,— that his army numbered five millions, and drank whole rivers dry; that three hundred Spartans checked his career at Thermopylae, when, in fact, they numbered over seven thousand; that Virginia perished by her father's hand; that Omar burned the Alexandrian library; and that Wellington at Waterloo took refuge in a square: while grave doubts have assailed the story of Cleopatra's dying by the asp's sting, that of

* For most of the facts and citations in the last three pages, the author is indebted to a writer in the N. Y. "Galaxy."

Canute commanding the waves to roll back, and that of Charles IX firing on the Huguenots from a window of the Louvre during the massacre of St. Bartholomew. Who is not familiar with the touching story of St. Pierre and his companions delivering up the keys of Calais to Edward III, with halters round their necks, and having their lives spared at the intercession of the Queen? Hume discredited it; it was shown by a French antiquary in 1835 to be unfounded; and now a later French writer points to documentary proof that St. Pierre was in collusion with the besiegers, and was pensioned by the English King. Who, again, has not heard the popular story of the origin of the Order of the Garter,—that it was owing to the accident that happened to the Countess of Salisbury, when dancing at the court of Edward III? It may be true; but the first mention made of it is by Polydore Virgil, who wrote two hundred years later. What historical tableau has been more deeply impressed on the public mind than the parting of Louis XVI from his family? The scene has been described in prose and verse, and portrayed in pictures of all sizes, yet never occurred. It is true the Queen wished, with the children, to see the King on the morning of his execution, and he consented; but he subsequently requested that they might not be permitted to return, as their presence too deeply affected him.

Again: what Napoleon-worshipping disciple of Headley or Abbott ever dreams of doubting that the hero of Lodi and Austerlitz really did scale the Alps on a fiery, high-mettled charger, with "neck clothed with thunder," as David, the French artist, has painted him? But let us hear the great Corsican himself: "The First Consul mounted, at the worst part of the ascent, the *mule* of

an inhabitant of St. Peter, selected by the prior of the convent as the surest-footed mule of that country." Such is the difference between reality and painting, truth and declamation. Again and again has it been denied by historical critics that the Russians burned Moscow to prevent Napoleon from making it his winter-quarters; and in vain do they assert what Mr. Douglas, at one time our minister to Russia, has confirmed, that hardly more than the suburbs, where the French were quartered, were set on fire, to cover the Russian attack. Maelzels and other showmen still renew the *infandum dolorem* of the conflagration in paintings and panoramas.

So long as biography is written, or an essayist loves to point his moral with an anecdote, we shall hear the story of Newton and his dog Diamond, which destroyed the papers which the philosopher set himself so patiently to rewrite; and that he cut two holes in his study door for his cat and kitten to go out and in, a big hole for the cat, and a small hole for the kitten,— albeit both stories are myths, since neither purring puss nor sprightly poodle were allowed within the precincts of the mathematician's thought-hallowed rooms. But the APPLE,— the falling of the apple? Surely, the lynx-eyed critics of history, who have cheated us out of so many pleasing illusions, will not rob us of *that?* In one sense, it is of little consequence whether the story be true or false. Unless observed by a mind already so prepared to make the discovery that *any* falling body would have started the proper train of ideas, the falling of ten thousand apples would have led to no discovery of gravitation. But what are the facts? We have, for the story, the authority of several of Newton's friends, and the opinion of M. Biot,

the eminent French savant, after a scrutiny of all the facts in the case; yet Sir David Brewster, who, in the first edition of his biography, declared his disbelief of the story, sticks still to his incredulity; and rhetoricians must still refer, with less confidence than eloquent effect, to "Newton and the falling apple."

It is popularly believed that Milton, in his blindness, dictated his immortal epic to his daughters, and a British painter has depicted the scene; though Dr. Johnson, in his life of the poet, declares that he would not suffer them to learn to write. The story that the Duke of Clarence was drowned, at his own request, in a butt of Malmsey, is still repeated in popular compilations of history; and the Right Hon. J. W. Croker, in a book for children, has had the incident illustrated by a wood-cut. The only foundation for the story, according to a historian of the Tower of London, is the well-known fondness of Clarence for Malmsey. "Whoever," says Sir Horace Walpole, "can believe that a butt of wine was the engine of his death, may believe that Richard (the Third) helped him into it, and kept him down till he was suffocated."

Till recently it was generally believed that Britain exchanged the name it had borne for more than a thousand years, for the new one of Anglia, or England, in the reign of Egbert, king of Wessex. A Witanegemot, or Parliament, the old chronicler tells us, was held at Winchester, A.D. 800, and then and there the change was made. But now comes Francis Palgrave with his "History of the Anglo-Saxons," and declares that the first nine years of Egbert's reign are a void in all the authentic chronicles, that the country "was not denominated England till a much later period," and that "the Parliament of England is a pure fable."

Among the stories of travelers which have been repeated again and again in histories, geographies, and Sunday-School books, none is more familiar to men in Christian lands than the account of "Juggernaut," the hideous idol under the wheels of whose car the deluded heathen of India have been supposed to throw themselves, with the hope of winning heaven by their self-sacrifice. According to the latest and highest authorities* on the subject, the popular belief on this latter point, so deeply rooted in childhood, and made vivid by wood-cuts, rests upon an entire misapprehension of the facts. "Jugernath," or rather "Jagernath," means simply "the Lord of Life"; self-immolation is utterly opposed to the spirit of his worship; and the poor wretches who have been supposed to court death by the idol, were simply involuntary victims, who, among the multitudes that crowded round the rope to pull, fell, in the excitement, under the wheels and were crushed.

It is said that a famous Hebrew commentator, having determined to write a work on Ezekiel, bargained, before he began his book, for a supply of 300 tons of oil. Were any writer to attempt the giant task of disabusing the world of all its historical illusions, he would need, we fear, not only tons of midnight oil, but an extra pair of brains and hands, and a lease of lives "renewable for ever." Among the grand and impressive incidents of history, none are more interesting than the *mots*, or striking expressions, which have dropped on memorable occasions from the mouths of great men. These, being brief, and so pungent as to stick like burrs in the mem-

* "Orissa," by Dr. N. W. Hunter, and "Ten Great Religions," by Rev. J. G. Clarke.

ory, one might suppose to have been accurately caught and reported by history. Yet, probably, not one in a hundred of these famous sayings was ever uttered,— at least, as reported,— by the men with whose names they are labelled. The fact is, the vast majority of these pungent anecdotes have received their point in the manufactory of the wit.

So long as the star-spangled banner continues to wave, and heroism to be admired, Americans will continue to believe that General Taylor at the crisis of Buena Vista called out, "A little more grape, Captain Bragg"; and equally impossible will it be to make them disbelieve that General Jackson fought at New Orleans behind breastworks of cotton. Yet Captain Bragg asserts that the "little more grape," like the schoolboy's whistle, produced itself,— in other words, is a poetic fiction; and "Old Hickory" always denied the truth of the cotton bale story, which certainly rather detracts from, than adds to, his glory. The only foundation for it was the fact that a few bales of cotton *goods* were flung into the breastwork, forming but an insignificant part of the material. Again: how often on the anniversary of the battle of New Orleans are we reminded of the famous cry of the British soldiers, viz.: "Beauty and Booty," though it has been declared by every surviving officer of that battle to be a fiction. Perhaps no hero of ancient or modern times has been credited with so many grand and even sublime utterances which he never uttered, as Lord Nelson. In Southey's admirable life of the hero, it is related that, when, going into the battle of the Nile, Captain Berry, Nelson's second in command, was told of the plan and its probable results, he exclaimed with transport,

"If we succeed, what will the world say?" "There is no *if* in the case," replied Nelson; "that we *shall* succeed, is certain. Who may live to tell the story, is a very different question." Mr. Massey quotes the anecdote in his history of the reign of George IV, and adds: "We are assured, on the authority of Captain Berry himself, that no such scene took place."

Again: who has not admired the simple majesty of the sentiment expressed in the order of Nelson at Trafalgar, which has so often been the battle-cry of Britannia's sons on sea and land: "England expects every man to do his duty"? Yet the real order was, "*Nelson* expects every man to do his duty," for which the former was ingeniously substituted by the officer whose business it was to telegraph the order to the fleet, simply because he could find no flag by which to telegraph the word Nelson. Once more,— whose soul has not been thrilled by the sublime sentiment of the reply with which the same hero is said to have silenced the affectionate importunities of his officers, when they entreated him to conceal the stars on his breast at the same battle: "In honor I gained them, and in honor I will die with them!" History has recorded few nobler sentiments, than which Tacitus could not have put a finer into the mouth of Agricola. But its merit is purely imaginative. The facts are, as Dr. Arnold gathered them from Sir Thomas Hardy, that Nelson wore on the day of battle *the same coat which he had worn for weeks*, having the Order of the Bath embroidered on it; and when his friends expressed some fears regarding the danger, Nelson answered that he was aware of the danger, but that it was "too late then to shift a coat."

"Up, Guards, and at them!" men will always believe to have been the exclamation of Wellington, while they thrill at the story of Waterloo, in spite of the Duke's protest that he uttered no such nonsense; and just as implicitly will they believe the tallying statement, that the captain of the Imperial Guards uttered the bravado, "*La garde meurt, et ne se rende pas!*"— which is purely a myth, albeit so dramatically introduced by Victor Hugo in his picture of the battle in *Les Miserables*, and inscribed, too, on the monument at Nantes. The last bombastic phrase was a pure invention of a French journalist two days after the battle. On the authority of Lamartine, every Frenchman religiously believes that Wellington in that terrible fight had seven horses killed under him, though it is well known in England that Copenhagen, the one horse that bore him through the day, escaped the murderous bullets, and died "in a green old age" at Strathfieldsaye. If we may believe the same poetic writer, the French were not beaten at Waterloo; they simply left the field in disgust. The splendid irony of Alexandre Dumas's compliment to the author of the "History of the Girondins" has rarely been surpassed. Meeting Dumas soon after the publication of that work, Lamartine inquired anxiously of the great romancer, if he had read it. "*Oui; c'est superbe! C'est de l'histoire élevée à la hauteur du roman.*"

A less memorable French *mot* than that invented for the commander of the Imperial Guard, is the cry of Philip of Valois, when, flying from the battle of Crecy, he arrived before the closed gates of the Castle of Braye, and exclaimed: "*Ouvrez, ouvrez, c'est la fortune de la France*,— Open, open to the fortunes of France." Turn-

ing to Froissart, the original source of the anecdote, we find — what? Instead of the fine sentiment we have quoted, by which the king embodies in himself the stricken fortunes of his country, only the tame exclamation, "*Ouvrez, ouvrez, c'est l'infortune Roi de la France,*— Open, open; 'tis the unfortunate King of France." Will any one who knows the intensity of a Frenchman's love for dramatic "effects," be surprised to learn that Chateaubriand, that *splendide mendax* writer, having misrelated this story in his History of France, refused, on being informed of his error, to correct it? Or is it strange that, with the same noble scorn for strict accuracy, and exclusive regard for artistic effect, Voltaire, on being asked where he found a certain startling "fact," in one of his histories, replied: "It is a frolic of my imagination?" For three centuries, historians have delighted to repeat the heroic sentiment expressed by Francis I, when writing to his mother from the battle-field of Pavia: "All is lost but honor" *(Tout est perdu fors l'honneur).* But how runs the letter which the King actually wrote on the occasion, and which has been preserved? Instead of the pithy, epigrammatic communication, as terse as a telegram, which Francis is said to have despatched from the battle-field, and which so electrifies the reader as the grand outburst of a regal spirit in sudden adversity, it turns out that the French monarch wrote *in prison*, by permission, a long letter, in which, after describing the battle, he says, prosaically: "With regard to the remaining details of my misfortune, honor, and life, which is safe, *(l'honneur et la vie qui est saulvé,)* are all that are left to me," etc., etc. Hardly less diluted in the original is the sententious despatch which Henry IV. is said to have written to one of his nobles

after the battle of Arques: "Hang thyself, brave Crillon; we have fought, and thou wert not there!" When we have learned, too, that "Hang thyself!" was a hackneyed expression of Henry's, repeated on the most trivial occasions, the *mot* sinks into the veriest commonplace.

What is more hackneyed than the saying attributed to Demosthenes, that "action, action, action!" that is, gesticulation, is the one thing essential to success in oratory? The word he used is κίνησις, the true signification of which is agitation, motion, anything of a stirring character. Not action, but emotion, which, if deeply felt, like murder, "will out," was what Demosthenes held to be so vitally essential, agreeing herein with the well-known maxim of Horace, that "if you wish me to weep, you must first grieve yourself." Again: how often has Cicero been quoted as having said, "I would rather err with Plato than hold the truth with the philosophers." The real sentiment of Cicero, "*Errare mehercule malo cum Platone . . . quam cum istis vera sentire*,"— which has been so often applauded by some, and by others denounced as an instance of excessive and almost idolatrous reverence for a giant intellect,— occurs in the "Tusculan Questions"; and it is only by the grossest perversion of the language that it can be construed into such an expression of a humiliating *general* submission to the authority of Plato as it is supposed to contain. The immediate point under discussion was the immortality of the soul, which was maintained by Plato, but denied by the Epicureans; and it is solely with reference to the conclusion of Plato on this *one* point, not to the weight of his *authority*, that Cicero prefers to err with him rather than to think rightly with them. In other words, the Roman writer prefers to share with the Greek what he deems the benefi-

cent possible error of eternal life, rather than entertain with Plato's opponents what he (Cicero) regards as the fearful and pernicious truth, if truth it be, of final annihilation.

A suspicious circumstance connected with many fine sentiments is, that they have been put by historians into the mouths of different persons, and on widely different occasions,—thus suggesting a doubt whether they were not invented for rhetorical effect. Thus when Louis XIV revoked the Edict of Nantes, Christina of Sweden is reported to have said: "He has cut off his left arm with the right." The epigram is as old as Valentinian. Almost every reader is familiar with the sarcasm attributed to Lord Eldon, concerning his successor on the woolsack, Lord Brougham, "If he only knew a little of law, he would know a little of everything." This is but a recoinage of a saying of Louis. Passing out of chapel after a sermon by the Abbé Maury, he said: "If the Abbé had said a little of religion, he would have spoken to us of everything." Sully, in his Memoirs, tells us that going one day to see Henry IV. he met on the back stairs leading to the King's apartment, a young lady veiled and dressed in green. Being asked by the King whether he had not been told that his majesty had a fever, and could not receive that morning: "Yes, sire," replied the minister, "but the fever is gone; I have just met it on the staircase dressed in green." Precisely the same story is told of Demetrius and his father.

"Were I to die at this moment," Nelson is said to have written to the English government after the Battle of the Nile, "*more frigates* would be found written on my heart." Two and a half centuries before, Mary, Queen of England,

is said to have deplored the loss of the last foothold of the English in France with the exclamation, "When I die *Calais* will be found written on my heart." Once more: Mr. Motley tells us in his History of the Dutch Republic, that Montpensier, a French prince, protested to Philip II of Spain that he would be cut in pieces for that monarch's service, and affirmed that "if his body were to be opened at that moment, the name of *Philip* would be found imprinted on his heart." Who has not admired the noble reply of Wellington to a lady who expressed a passionate desire to witness a great victory,—"Madam, there is nothing so dreadful as a great victory,—excepting a great defeat." Yet this speech was made long before by D'Argenson, and is reported by Grimm. Among the countless pungent witticisms attributed to Voltaire, we are informed that having extolled Haller, he was told that he was very generous in so doing, since Haller had just said the contrary of him; whereupon Voltaire remarked, after a short pause, "Perhaps we are both of us mistaken." Is it not a curious coincidence, that, centuries before this, Libanius should have written to Aristænetus, "You are always speaking ill of me. I speak nothing but good of you. Do you not fear that neither of us shall be believed?"

It has been said with truth that in Athenæus, Macrobius, and other old jest-books, we shall find more than one witty saying which now adorns the brazen front of the plagiary. It is stated that when Lord Stormont boasted to Foote, the English comedian, of the great age of some wine which, in his parsimony, he doled out in very small glasses, Foote observed, "It is very little of its age." This identical joke is reported by Athenæus, and assigned to one Gnathæna, whose jokes were better than her character.

In Irving's "Abbotsford" we are told that Sir Walter Scott was going on with great glee to tell a story of the Laird of Macnab, "who, poor fellow," he said, "is dead and gone." "Why, Mr. Scott," exclaimed his "gude wife," "Macnab's not dead, is he?" "Faith, my dear," replied Scott, with humorous gravity, "if he is not dead, they have done him great injustice, for they've buried him." The joke "passed harmless and unnoticed by Mrs. Scott, but hit the poor Dominie just as he had raised a cup of tea to his lips, causing a burst of laughter which sent half of the contents about the table." Queer,—is it not,—that in Dean Swift's specimens of genteel conversation in his own time, we should find the following: "*Colonel.* Is it certain that Sir John Blunderbuss is dead at last? *Lord Sparkish.* Yes, or else he's sadly wronged, for they have buried him." Among the after-dinner *facetiæ* attributed to Thackeray is a saying of his to Angus B. Reach, a clever young Scotchman, who, when addressed as Mr. Reach, indignantly exclaimed, "My name is pronounced *Ree-ack*, in two syllables." Handing his angry neighbor a peach, Mr. Thackeray said: "Mr. *Ree-ack*, will you allow me to help you to a *pee-ack?*" In the Diary of Thomas Moore, we read that Luttrell, the wit, dined at the same table with a gentleman whose father invented the small napkins called from the name, *doilies.* This gentleman having insisted on being addressed as Mr. D'Oyley, with a long rest between the "D" and the rest of the name, Luttrell, pointing to a dumpling, blandly said, "Mr. D'—Oyley, may I ask you for a little of the d'—umpling, near you?"

Macaulay's famous New Zealander is now known to be the same person, in different costume, as Shelley's "Transatlantic Commentator," Kirke White's "Bold Adventurer,"

and Horace Walpole's "Traveler from Lima"; and the joke attributed to Sheridan, on his son's saying that he had gone down a mine to be able to say he had done so,—"Why not say you had, without going down?" has been reclaimed by Mr. Forster for Goldsmith. An English wit used to say: "I don't like my jokes until Sheridan has used them, then I can appreciate them." Wit, it has been well said, like gold, is circulated sometimes with one head on it, and sometimes with another, according to the potentates who rule its realm. What was the memorable jest, in all the newspapers a few years ago, about the eccentricities of a certain family, but a repetition of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu's witticism that "the world was made up of men and women and Herveys?" So the germ of Douglas Jerrold's joke, that "it is better to be witty and wise than witty and otherwise," has been detected in a book published in 1639; and the threadbare illustration of a dwarf standing on the shoulders of a giant, employed to illustrate the advantage of modern over ancient learning, is used by Sir William Temple, is quoted by old Burton, and has been traced back to the twelfth century.

Many of these similarities of thought and expression, like many wonderful discoveries and inventions, are, no doubt, merely coincidences. As the human mind and the human heart are the same in all ages, we must not be surprised to find that

> "—kindred objects kindred thoughts inspire,
> As summer clouds flash forth electric fire."

Perhaps of all the memorable sayings of great men, there is no other about which lovers of rhetoric have so often had their commonplace, as about the famous "*e pur si muove*,"—"and yet the earth *does* move,"—of the

silenced, but not persuaded Galileo. And yet, as a late French writer has shown, not only is there no proof that Galileo ever uttered the epigram, but it flagrantly contradicts his whole demeanor on the trial. To regard him as a martyr of science is simply ridiculous. Never was a martyr less disposed for martyrdom. He denied everything with impatient alacrity. He offered to prove that he had never *held* the doctrine of the earth's mobility, and declared himself ready to show, by fresh arguments, the error of that doctrine. In short, the epigram is "one of those *mots de circonstance*, invented after the occasion, which tradition eagerly adopts because it so admirably expresses the general sentiment."

Writers on religious toleration are fond of quoting the supposed saying of Charles V, Emperor of Germany, who in his retirement kept many clocks and watches, the mechanism of which he was fond of studying, that it was unreasonable to expect men to think alike, when no two clocks or watches could be made to keep precisely the same time. Not only does the story rest on no good authority, but its mythical character is evident *à priori* from the fact that in his last hours Charles enjoined on his son Philip to enforce uniformity of opinion by means of that terrible engine, the Inquisition. Moreover, he again and again expressed his regret that he did not put Luther to death when he had him in his power. Another story of Charles, long implicitly believed on the authority of the Scottish historian, Robertson, but now exploded, is that the Emperor held a mock funeral of himself,—celebrated his own obsequies,—and in so doing caught a cold which made a *real* funeral necessary two days afterwards.

Among the stereotyped quotations of our political wri-

ters and stump orators, there is no one which drops oftener from their lips and pens than that which is so generally attributed to Gen. Charles Cotesworthy Pinckney, namely: "Millions for defence,—not one cent for tribute." While Mr. P. was Ambassador to the French Court, Bonaparte was preparing for operations against Great Britain, and had pledged the representatives of other powers to degrading contributions. What Mr. Pinckney really did say, when Napoleon turned to him and asked, "And what will *your* Republic give?" was, "Not a penny,—not a penny." The cent was not then known among our coin. Nearly contemporary with this was the witty reply said to have been made by Thelwall to Erskine, when the latter, in reply to the former's proposal to defend himself from the charge of treason, wrote, "If you do, you'll be hanged." "Then I'll be hanged if I do," was Thelwall's prompt rejoinder. A living relative of Thelwall's declares that he had from his own lips the statement that no such correspondence ever took place.

Of all the brilliant epigrammatic sayings that have been attributed to the wrong author, no one perhaps has been more frequently quoted than that ascribed to that prince of epigrammatists, Talleyrand, on the murder of the Duke D'Enghien by Napoleon: "It is worse than a crime: it is a blunder." The real author of the *mot* was Fouché. So, because they have the ring of his unique witticisms, to Talleyrand have been attributed the saying, "It is the beginning of the end;" the Chevalier de Panat's remark on the Bourbons, that "they had learned nothing, and forgotten nothing;" the saying of Chamfort that "revolutions are not made with rose-water;" and Napoleon's observation, "A king by birth is shaved by another. He who

makes kings is shaved by himself." To the same arch diplomatist and wit has been attributed the famous saying that "speech was given to man to conceal his thoughts,"—a *mot* which has been traced back to Goldsmith, to Voltaire, to the poet Young, to South, to Job, till we almost reach the Prometheus who stole the original fire from Heaven. So lucky or so cunning was Talleyrand that he even got the credit of saying of others what was said against himself. Thus, the remark, "Who would not adore him,—he is so vicious?" was said of him by Montrond, not by him of Montrond; and his pithy interrogatory to the dying man who cried out that he was suffering the torments of the damned,—"*Deja?*" (Already?)—was murmured by Louis Phillippe when Talleyrand thus characterized his own sufferings.

Of all peoples the French have the most passionate love for epigrams, and when a great man or a great occasion wants one, they do not hesitate to invent it. Chamfort characterizes the old régime as "an absolute monarchy tempered by epigrams." Henry IV reigned by *bon mots*, and even Bonaparte, in the plenitude of his power, could not dispense with them. It was in the reign of Louis XIV that they reached the zenith of their splendor. When the king made an appointment, he communicated it to the object of his condescension in an elegant saying. "If I had known a more deserving person," he would say, "I would have selected him." Perhaps no impromptu has been more admired than the well-known saying of Louis XII. when urged to revenge certain insults offered to him before his accession to the throne: "The King of France does not revenge the injuries of the Duke of Orleans." Of both the Roman Emperor, Hadrian, and the Duke of

Savoy, predecessors of Louis, is the same anecdote related; and, instead of being uttered thus concisely by Louis to the Duke de la Tremouille, the saying was the conclusion of an address to the deputies of the city of Orleans, who were told that it would not be decent or honorable in a King of France to revenge the quarrels of a Duke of Orleans. The reply of Hadrian was: "*Minime licere Principi Romano ut quæ privatus agitasset odia, ista Imperator exequi.*"

Who has not admired the daring address of Mirabeau to the minister of Louis XVI, who had been sent to the National Assembly, to demand its dissolution?—"Go tell your master that we are here by the will of the people, and that we will not depart except at the point of the bayonet!" The real language of Mirabeau is far milder, and lacks the most audacious words ascribed to him. Almost every history of the French Revolution records the famous invocation to Louis on the scaffold: "*Fils de Saint-Louis, montez au ciel!*" Yet, when questioned on the address by Lord Holland, the Abbé Edgeworth frankly owned that he had no recollection of having made it. It was put into his mouth, on the evening of the execution, by a journalist.

One of the most signally successful hits in the form of an invented saying, in French history, is the speech put into the mouth of the Comte d'Artois, brother of Louis XVIII, at the Restoration. As his Royal Highness rode into town, he was received by a brilliant company, and, in reply to an address by Talleyrand, stammered out a few confused sentences, for which it was felt by the shrewd statesman that some substitute must be prepared for the *Moniteur*. Dupont offered to do it. "No, no,"

replied Talleyrand, "you would make it too poetical. Beugnot will do for that." Beugnot sat down to his task, but, finding some difficulty, returned to Talleyrand, and told him of it. "Why," said Talleyrand, "if what he said does not suit you, *invent* an answer for him." "But how can I make a speech that *Monsieur* never pronounced?" "There is no difficulty about that," replied Talleyrand; "make it good, suitable to the person and to the occasion, and I promise you that *Monsieur* will accept it, and so well, that in two days he will believe he made it himself; and he *will* have made it himself; you will no longer have had anything to do with it." "'Capital!' I answered, says Beugnot, "and attempted my first version, and brought it to be approved. 'That won't do,' said Talleyrand; '*Monsieur* never makes antitheses or rhetorical flourishes.' I attempt a new version, and am sent back a second time for making it too elaborate. At last I am delivered of the one inserted in the *Moniteur*, in which I make the prince say: 'No more discord: Peace and France; at last I revisit my native land; nothing is changed, except it be that *there is one Frenchman the more.*' '*This* time I give in!' exclaimed Talleyrand. '*That* is what *Monsieur did* say, and I answer for its having been pronounced by him.' In fact, the speech proved a perfect success; the newspapers took it up as a lucky hit; it was repeated as an engagement made by the Prince; and the expression, '*One Frenchman more!*' became the necessary pass-word of the harangues, which began to pour in from all quarters." When the Prince complained to the ministers that he never uttered it, he was told that there was an

imperious *necessity* for his having uttered it; and it became history.

But the French are not the only people who have been cheated into admiration of grand oratorical explosions that never took place. Chatham's famous outburst in reply to Horace Walpole, beginning, "The atrocious crime of being a young man," etc., is the composition of Dr. Johnson, who was not even present when the actual reply was made, and of whose fidelity as a parliamentary reporter we may judge from his boast that he took care always that the Whig dogs should have the worst of it.

The interest which attaches to the dying words of great men offers a powerful temptation to the inventive talents of historians and biographers. Many of these last utterances are too epigrammatic and sensational,— too well rounded off and polished,— not to provoke a doubt about their genuineness. Did Augustus Cæsar, in dying, ask if he had played his part well on life's stage, and, when answered in the affirmative, say, "Then applaud"? Did Vespasian bid his attendants raise him from his couch, adding that an Emperor ought to die on his legs, — *decet Imperatorem stantem mori?* Did Chaucer alleviate his dying pains by "A Balade, made upon his dethebedde, lying in his great anguysse"? Did Scarron say to those weeping about him, "My children, you will never weep for me one half so much as I have made you laugh"? Did Chesterfield, courteous to the last, gasp out *in articulo mortis*, "Give Dayrolles a chair"? How often has it been stated in private, and echoed from the pulpit, that the skeptic Hume died in an agony of remorse, though his christian biographer declares that his last moments were as peaceful and unruffled as the

gentle Addison's, and though some of Hume's more intelligent enemies have asserted that in jesting about Charon and the boat, and his arguments with the ferryman to let him off a little longer, the Scottish philosopher affected an indifference which he did not feel! It is said the last words of Louis XV to Madame Du Barri were, "We shall meet again in another world." "A pleasant rendezvous he is giving me!" she murmured; "that man never thought of any one but himself." Almost precisely the same story is told of Louis XIV and Madame Maintenon. Among the last words of Burns were, "Don't let the awkward squad fire over me," meaning a body of local militia, of which he was a member, and whose discipline he, to the last, humorously disparaged. It is reported that the philosopher Haller kept his finger on his pulse till he expired, which was immediately upon saying, "My friend, the artery ceases to beat." Pitt's heart was broken by Austerlitz, and he died exclaiming, "Oh, my country! how I leave my country!"

It is a popular belief that Truth, if run over by a locomotive and train, gets well; while Error dies of lockjaw, if it but scratches its finger. But facts show this to be an illusion. When the world has once got hold of a lie, it is wonderful how hard it is to get it out of the world. You beat it on the head, and think it has given up the ghost, when lo! it jumps up again, as lively and thrifty as ever. Bacon, in one of his weighty essays, after remarking that truth is a naked and open daylight, that does not show the masks, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-lights, adds, that "a mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure." Once declare to the world

that Berkeley denies the existence of matter, and all over the world men with Berkeley in their hands will echo the absurdity. Say that Locke denies all knowledge except through the medium of the senses, and though Locke be studied in every college, the statement will pass unchallenged. Let some Fourth of July Orator quote from Bacon the hackneyed sentiment, "Knowledge is power," and other orators will ring the changes upon it *in saecula saeculorum*, though Bulwer again and again deny that the author of the "Instauration" ever penned such an aphorism.

Of all popular fallacies there is no one more frequently on men's lips than the statement that Bacon was the father of the Inductive Philosophy, the grand founder of modern science. But it may be doubted whether his Novum Organon, or new instrument of Philosophy, was really new when he announced it as such, either as a process followed in scientific discovery, or as a theory of the true method of discovery. Bacon was neither the first to proclaim the barrenness of the Aristotelian philosophy, nor is his the glory of having ended the reign of that philosophy in Europe. He but hastened the downfall of a system already in disrepute, and which would soon have been banished from the schools had his "Instauration" never been published. In short, as De Maistre has shown, he was a barometer that announced the fine weather after a long period of storm and controversy; and because he *foretold* the glorious daylight of true science after the darkness of the middle ages, he was proclaimed the author of it. A contemporary called him truly "the prophet of science." "I have seen," says De Maistre, "the design of a medal struck in his honor, the body of which is a rising sun, with the inscription, *Exortus uti aetherius sol* ('He

rose like the sun in the sky'). Nothing is more plainly false. Better an aurora, with the inscription, *Nuncia solis* ('Messenger of the sun'); and even this would be an exaggeration, for, when Bacon rose, it was at least ten o'clock in the morning."

How often do we hear attributed to Sir Robert Walpole the execrable saying, "All men have their price." Pope refers to it in the lines:

> "Would he oblige me, let me only find
> He does not think *me* what he thinks mankind."

But the "Grand Corrupter," as he was nicknamed by his libelers, uttered no such sweeping slander against his fellow-men. He simply declared of his corrupt opponents. "All *those* men have their price," a truth as unquestionable as his alleged maxim was false. Again, let Lord Orrery relate, as an unquestionable occurrence, that Dean Swift once began the service when nobody, except the clerk, attended his church, with "Dearly beloved Roger, the scripture moveth you and me in sundry places," and the scandal will be again and again repeated, though a kinsman of the Dean show that it was published of another person in a jest book before Swift was born. The author of "The Tale of a Tub" and "The Battle of the Books" was not so destitute of originality as to have to borrow a joke as paltry as it was profane. So Swift and Butler will forever continue, we suppose, to divide the honors of the closing couplet of the epigram on the feud between Handel and Bononcini:

> "Strange that all this difference should be
> 'Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee,—"

though neither of these wits was the author, but Dr. Byrom, of Manchester. As "to him that hath shall be given,"

to Butler, so long as the world is infested with rascals, will be awarded the credit of Trumbull's sarcasm on the Tories of the Revolution:

> "No rogue e'er felt the halter draw
> With good opinion of the law."

Among the hackneyed quotations of the day is the line,

> "Small by degrees, and beautifully less,"

which is invariably misquoted from "Henry and Emma," a parody published in 1721, on Matthew Prior's "Nut Brown Maid." Describing the dress of Emma, the lover says:

> "No longer shall the bodice, aptly laced,
> From thy full bosom to thy slender waist,
> That air of harmony and shape express,
> *Fine* by degrees, and beautifully less."

Another current quotation which, in England and France, and occasionally in this country, is attributed to Buffon, is this: "*Le style, c'est l'homme*," — the style is the man. Even Professor Marsh, in his lectures on the English Language, reproduces the misquotation, which asserts a manifest untruth. What Buffon really did say was this: "*Le style est de l'homme même*,"—"the style of a writer," that is, distinguished from the contents of a work, which must be pushed aside by fresh discoveries, "is his own peculiar contribution." Perhaps the tritest of all threadbare quotations is the saying, "There is but one step from the sublime to the ridiculous;" yet even of this the paternity is commonly mistaken. It has so often been credited to Napoleon, instead of to Thomas Paine, that even intelligent persons are puzzled to fix the authorship.

It has been well observed that sometimes an invented pleasantry passes for fact, as in the asparagus and oil story

of Fontenelle. Fontenelle,—so the myth runs,—was supping with a friend who liked oil, which the former disliked. It was agreed that half the asparagus should be dressed with oil, and half without. The friend dropped down in an apoplectic fit, and immediately Fontenelle hurried to the door, and called out, "*Point d'huile!*"—"No oil!" How many thousands have believed the malicious story about Gibbon, that, offering himself to Mademoiselle Churchod (afterwards Madame Neckar), he went down on his knees, and, being very fat, was unable to get up. The simple fact is, that she asked him why he did not go down on his knees to her, and he replied, "Because you would be obliged to ring for your footman to get me up again."

So many historic sayings have never been uttered by the great men to whom they have been attributed, that we need not be astonished if we one day learn that Cæsar's "*Veni, vidi, vici*," is a myth; that Perry never wrote the immortal words, "We have met the enemy, and they are ours;" and that Lawrence's "Don't give up the ship!" is an old sailor's yarn. Indeed, Napoleon, who understood the military skill of "the foremost man of all the world," ridiculed as absurd that saying of the great Julius to the pilot in a storm, "What do you fear? You carry Cæsar!" Americans, at least American musical critics, are not excessively proud of "Yankee Doodle, either the words or the tune; but the poor honor of its composition, it seems, is not ours. The song and tune date back to the wars of Roundhead and Cavalier. An early version of the words in England runs:

"Nankee Doodle came to town
Upon a Kentish pony;
He stuck a feather in his hat,
And called him Macaroni."

The English, it is said, borrowed the song from Germany, and it was introduced to America as a martial or national air by a Dr. Shackburg, a surgeon of the regular troops at Albany, who was so struck by the *outrè* appearance of the raw colonial levies gathered there in 1755 for the attack on the French posts of Niagara and Frontenac, that he quizzically prepared a song for them to the tune of *Yankee Doodle*, which they at once adopted as their own. It would be easy to multiply these illustrations, but we will add but one more,—the over-hackneyed piece of nonsense attributed to Archimedes, that give him a place to stand on with his lever, and he would move the world. This is one of the standard allusions, a part of the necessary stock-in-trade of all orators and newspaper-writers; and persons, whenever they meet with it, think of Archimedes as an extraordinarily great man,—a giant of the intellectual giants,—and cry, "Really, how wonderful!"

Now, it is a well-known principle of mechanical forces that the velocities at the extremities of a lever are reciprocally as the weights at those extremities, and the lengths of the arms directly as those same velocities. So it has been shown that if, at the moment when Archimedes uttered his memorable saying, God had taken him at his word by furnishing him with place, prop, and lever, also with materials of sufficient strength, together with a counter-weight of two hundred pounds,—the fulcrum being at three thousand leagues from the centre of the earth,—the great geometer would have required a lever of twelve quadrillions of miles long, and a velocity at the extremity of the long arm equal to that of a cannon ball, to raise the earth one inch in twenty-seven trillions of years! Yet will this exposure of the colossal ab-

surdity be of any use? Of not the slightest. Orators will continue to employ this bravura of rhetoric, and men will continue to gape with astonishment at the boast of Archimedes, as if he had been foolish enough to make it,— of which, out of Plutarch, there is no proof whatever.

The Roman poet, Horace, tells of a crazy citizen of Argos who fancied that he sat in a theatre, seeing and applauding wonderful tragedies. Being cured of his madness by his friends with a dose of hellebore, instead of thanking them, he was indignant, and exclaimed, "By Pollux, you have killed me, not saved me, in thus robbing me of my pleasure, and expelling from my mind a most delightful illusion!" Not unlike this, we fear, have been the feelings of the reader, while we have been disabusing him, perhaps, of some of his historical hallucinations. *Cui bono?* Of what use is it thus to throw all our heroes and heroines into the crucible? Are you sure that, as Dryden said of Shakspeare, burn them down as you will, there will always be precious metal at the bottom of the melting pot? Can we be confident of anything that is told us of past times? Is *all* history false? or, if not, how are we to discriminate the gold from the dross,— the reality from the counterfeit? If I choose to believe in the gaunt she-wolf of the Tiber, or that the unhappy Mary of Scotland was as good as she was beautiful, what harm can it do me? Why must I be pestered into the conviction that the first is a myth, and that the last was a courtesan and a murderess? Grant that the heroism of a Lucretia,— of a Mucius Scævola,— is a fable; as Goethe says, "if the Romans were great enough to invent such stories, we should at least be great enough to believe them." If it be true that "where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise"; if

the secret of all earthly bliss lies in preserving our illusions,— in contriving, as we go through life, not to be disenchanted; how can you expect us to be grateful to, even if we are not positively angry with, the Niebuhrs, the Lewises, and other historical big-wigs, who have dethroned so many of our idols? Is history so rich in noble deeds and utterances, that we can afford to lose any of the god-like acts, any of the sparkling jests, the happy inspirations, the thrilling improvisations, of great and good men? Are not these "fables," as you call them, almost the only poetry the State and county taxes have not crushed out of our hearts? Nay, can we spare a single epigram?

In reply, let us say, first, that, in spite of all we have said, the substance of history remains intact. As in the case of money, the very word *counterfeit* implies the existence of a true,— nay, that the great mass of silver or gold coin is genuine,— so with the stories of the nations. Again, let us remember that the spirit of inquiry and the spirit of scepticism are as widely removed as the poles. The same relentless iconoclasm, the same searching spirit of inquiry, which cheats us of many of our fond illusions, may also relieve human nature of countless unjust stigmas of meanness, stupidity, cowardice, and cruelty.

Again, as the value of the real gem is enhanced by the exposure of the counterfeit,— as the Dutch, by destroying one-half of their spice trees, increased the value of the entire crop,— so will the common stock of recorded or traditional wit, virtue, and heroism, be rather increased in value than depreciated by the illusion-destroying process to which history has been subjected by modern criticism. The occasional loss of a charming error will

be compensated, and more than compensated, by the habits of sharpness and accuracy we shall acquire, by challenging every story which taxes our credulity. We are aware that it is sometimes said that ignorance is the mother of admiration. If this be so, then it follows that one of the noblest and healthiest exercises of the mind rests chiefly on a deceit and a delusion,— that, with fuller knowledge, all our enthusiasm would cease; whereas, in fact, for once that ignorance leads us to admire that which, with fuller insight, we should perceive to be a cheat or a sham, a hundred, nay, a thousand times, it prevents us from admiring that which is admirable indeed. While, therefore, some eyes will look sorrowfully upon this reformation,— will regard it, in the fine image of Landor, like breaking off a crystal from the vault of a twilight cavern, out of mere curiosity to see where the accretion ends and the rock begins,— others will agree with Dr. Johnson, that the value of a story depends on its truth; on its being a picture of an individual, as of human nature in general; and that, if it be false, it is a picture of nothing.

Lady Mary Wortley Montagu closes one of her letters with the remark: "There is nothing can pay one for that valuable ignorance which is the companion of youth. . . . To my extreme mortification, I find that I am growing wiser and wiser every day." But does any sensible man regret,— or any sensible woman, in this age of Somervilles, Stowes, and Martineaus,— that he is no longer cheated by the fictions that amused his childhood? — that he has ceased to believe that Romulus and Remus were suckled by a wolf, and that Jack-the-Giant-killer, Sinbad the Sailor, and Robinson Crusoe, were flesh-and-

blood personages? If not, why should he mourn because some relentless investigator threatens to sweep away the myths that have deceived his maturer judgment by suggesting grave doubts whether Curtius did actually jump into the gulf, or whether there was any gulf for him to leap into; whether Portia swallowed live coals; whether Xerxes cut a canal through Mount Athos, and clouded the sun with the arrows of his soldiers; whether Cocles defended a bridge, single-handed, against an entire army; whether Rome was saved by a goose, and captured by a hare; whether Hannibal levelled rocks, and Cleopatra dissolved pearls, with vinegar; whether Belisarius did beg an obolus in the streets of Constantinople; whether Scævola burned his right hand, or Regulus died a heroic death; whether Zisca's skin was made into a drum-head; whether Columbus's egg had not tried its trick of balancing long before the fifteenth century; whether he did not first discover Watling Island, instead of Cat Island (or San Salvador), and whether the Norwegians were not 500 years ahead of him; whether Alfred really burnt the cakes, and went disguised into the Danish camp; whether Hengist and Horsa, Rowena and Vortigern, are not shadows; whether Cromwell's dead body was hung in chains at Tyburn; whether there *was* really a Pope Joan? and whether Captain John Smith had more lives than ten cats, and was saved by Pocahontas.

Within a few years it has been found, by the discovery of the Sinaitic and other very ancient manuscripts of the New Testament, that some of its most admired passages are forgeries,— mediæval additions to the original text. It is sad to learn that the story of the woman taken in adultery is a myth. It is sadder still to learn

that the utterance of our Lord on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," is not to be found in some of the old manuscripts, and that the words in the Sermon on the Mount, in Matt. v, 44,—"Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you,"—words which lie at the very foundation of Christian morality,—must be swept away from the sacred text. What, then, shall we do? Shall we throw aside our Testaments, or shall we weep over the loss of these precious verses? What, indeed, do we want? Is it the interpolations of monks, or the very words, the exact language, of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, without a syllable or a letter added or removed? For ourselves, we thank God for every exposure of a forgery, whether in His book or in man's books; and to our mind the most cogent proof that the Holy Scriptures are from Him, is the fact that while other histories have been found to swarm with errors, they, when subjected to the intensest, most microscopic scrutiny of modern criticism, have come forth from the ordeal substantially unscathed.

God grant that the day may never come when we shall adopt the Jesuitical doctrine of Infidelity's latest champion, Rénan. "For the success of what is good," he tells us in his "Life of Jesus," "less pure ways are necessary"; "the best cause is only won by *ill means;* we must accept men as they are, with all their illusions, and thus endeavor to work upon them; France would not be what it is, if it had not for a thousand years *believed in the flask of holy oil at Rheims;* when we with our scrupulous regard for *truth* have accomplished what the heroes did by their *deceptions*, then, and not till then, shall

we have a right to blame them; the only culprit in such cases is mankind, who *wants* to be cheated." (The italics are ours). So, according to this unblushing apostle of fraud, we are not to believe with John Milton that "Truth is strong, next to the Almighty; she needs no *policies*, nor stratagems, nor licensings, to make her victorious." Instead of destroying the delusions of our fellow men, we must use them cunningly, cheat those who want to be cheated, and rouge and powder, if need be, the face of Truth herself, to make her attractive. And this is the morality of a French democrat who would have us give up our Bibles! Let us cultivate a reverent love for Truth,—pure Truth, without gloss, alloy, or adulteration. Let us seek to know "the truth, the *whole* Truth, and NOTHING BUT THE TRUTH," in history, in science, in literature, and in religion, at whatever sacrifice of our prejudices, or whatever havoc it may make with our fondly-cherished illusions; for, if there is any truth which all the experience of the past thunders in our ears, it is that falsehood is moral poison,—that any short-lived pleasure which we may derive from cheating ourselves or from being cheated, will be dearly paid for by the disappointment and anguish which will be ours when the veil shall be torn away, and we shall see things as they are.

HOMILIES ON EARLY RISING.

AMONG the favorite topics of newspaper declamation, there is none upon which certain moralists of the press are fonder of preaching a quarterly homily, than upon the importance of early rising. Of course, the arguments for the practice are the old, hackneyed, stereotyped ones upon which the changes have been rung a thousand times,—"straw that has been threshed a hundred times without wheat," as Carlyle would say. "Early to bed, and early to rise," etc. There is a freshness, a briskness, a sparkling liveliness in the first hours of the day, which all the subsequent ones lack; let it stand but an hour or two, and it is already settled upon its lees; it is stale, flat, and vapid. Again, the early riser seizes the day by the forelock; he drives it, instead of being driven, or rather dragged along, by it. Then, all the great men,—especially those who have distinguished themselves in literature, science, and the arts,—were early risers. Homer, Virgil, Horace, among the ancients, and Paley, Priestly, Parkhurst, and Franklin, among the moderns, all left their pillows early. Sir Thomas More and Bishops Jewel and Burnet sprang upon their feet at four in the morning. The Great Frederic of Prussia, Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, and Napoleon, were early risers. "When you begin to turn in bed," said the Duke of Wellington, "it is time to turn out." Jefferson declared at the close of his life, "The sun has not caught me in bed for fifty years."

Did not Sir Walter Scott write all his great novels before breakfast, and was it not in the same early hours that Dr. Albert Barnes penned those Commentaries of which a million volumes have been sold in this country and Europe? Was it not between the hours of five and eight in the morning that John Quincy Adams penned most of his public papers? Was it not in the same three hours that Gibbon wrote his immortal "Decline and Fall," and has not Buffon told us that to the studies of those three hours daily the world is indebted for the noble work which established his fame as the greatest of natural historians? Did not Judge Holt, who was curious concerning longevity, and questioned every old man that came before him, about his modes of living, find that, amid all their different habits, they agreed in one thing,—*they got up betimes?* These stale anecdotes, eked out with the old quotation from Thomson,

"Falsely luxurious, will not man awake?"

and other passages from the poets in which they try to inveigle people from their beds by singing of the beauty of the dappled morn, the dewy grass, the warbling birds, and preserving a studied silence concerning the rising fog, the chill air, and the raw, underdone feeling of the world generally,—comprise all the arguments which, for half a century, the wit of the early risers has been able to scrape together for the practice.

Now all this may carry great weight with some people with whom an uneasy conscience, an overloaded stomach, or a hard bed, may, like Macbeth, "murder sleep." It is not strange that your old bachelor, who is happy neither in bed nor out,—or your henpecked husband, who dreads a morning curtain lecture,—or your ghostly, pale-faced,

dyspeptic student, who fancies that by rising with the lark he is to become a giant in law, medicine, or theology,—cries up this foolish custom. Making a merit of necessity, they may grow grand and intolerant on the strength of their virtue, and crow like chanticleer over those who can appreciate the luxury of "t'other doze." But those who have no torturing conscience, dyspepsia, or "Damien's bed of steel," to make Alcmena nights for them, are not to be dragged from their warm pillows on such pretences as these. Talk of the healthiness of early rising! Who can believe that such violent changes from the sleeping to the waking state,—from warm to cold,—are beneficial to the system? Why is it, if they are not unnatural, that the poets, refining upon the torments of the damned, make one of their greatest agonies to consist in being suddenly transported from heat to cold, from fire to ice? Are they not, at certain revolutions, according to Milton, "haled out of their beds" by "harpy-footed furies,"—fellows by whom they are made to

> "—feel by turns the bitter change
> Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce"?

"But think," we hear some one exclaim, "of the amount of time saved by early rising"! When all other arguments are exhausted, the early riser will call for slate and pencil, and proceed to prove to you by a painful arithmetical calculation that you may add some six or seven years to your life by crawling out of bed at five o'clock instead of seven. Of course, he makes it convenient to forget, in his calculation, the two hours one *loses* by hurrying to bed that much sooner, in order to humor his foolish eccentricity; as if one should try to lengthen a yard-stick by cutting off a foot from one end

and adding it to the other. Admitting that we may add to our days by rising early, is the longest life necessarily the best? Or is it desirable to spin out one's years to threescore and ten, if, to do so, he must cheat himself of all life's comforts and luxuries,— abjure his morning snooze, "feed on pulse, and nothing wear but frieze"? The lapse of years alone is not life; we should count time by heart-throbs,— by the number of delicious or pleasing sensations.

As to one's growing wealthy by early rising, we leave it to the candle-end-saving economists to say whether it is cheaper to keep one's self warm by coal at ten dollars a ton than between a mattress bed and comforters. Recollect that you wear out no clothes, consume no oil, eat no breakfasts, while you are coquetting with "tired nature's sweet restorer." Then, as to growing wise by early rising,— has not knowledge-seeking been associated, from time immemorial, with the midnight oil? Have not all the great works of genius which have conferred immortality on their authors, been written while the rest of the world was hushed in slumber,— in the "wee small hours ayant the 'twal"? Is not every elaborate literary production said to smell of the lamp, thus showing that, in the opinion of authors and critics, Apollo has no time to attend to his votaries until he has unharnessed his steeds from the chariot of the sun? Did not Pope's best thoughts come to him, like owls, in the night-time; and did not Swift, according to a contemporary, "lie abed till eleven o' clock, and think of wit for the day"? But, admitting an exception or two to the general rule,— because Sir Walter Scott wrote whole books before breakfast, is anyone foolish enough to flatter himself that *he* can dash off Waverleys and Ivanhoes simply by striking a light at four in the

morning,—*poscente ante diem librum cum lumine?* Boobies and dunces will be boobies and dunces still, though they keep their eyes wide open from January to December. Early rising will no more convert a fool into a wise man,—a commonplace man into a man of genius,—than eating opium will make him a Coleridge or a De Quincey. The examples of Frederic the Great and the Emperor Napoleon may weigh with their admirers; but we believe it would have been far better for humanity if they had loved their pillows. It was only after a desperate and most unnatural struggle that the former triumphed in his youth over the charms of sleep, which he found it harder to resist than in after life to rout the Austrians; and he succeeded only by invoking the assistance of an old domestic whom he charged, on pain of dismissal, to pull him out of bed every morning at two o'clock. As to the poet Thomson's panegyrics on early rising, who usually snored away the whole forenoon in bed, and was so lazy that he used to eat peaches from the trees in his garden with his hands in his waistcoat pocket,—literally *browsing*, like a giraffe,—our judgment of his counsel is pithily expressed by an American poet, Saxe:

> "Thomson, who sang about the Seasons, said
> It is a glorious thing to rise in season;
> But then he said it,—lying,—in his bed
> At ten o'clock A. M.,—the very reason
> He wrote so charmingly. The simple fact is,
> His preaching wasn't sanctioned by his practice."

It is very well to "take Time by the forelock"; but what if, in the effort to do so, one exhausts himself too much to hold him? George Eliot, in one of her novels, portrays a thrifty farmer's wife who rose so early in the morning to do her work, that by ten o'clock it was all over, and she was at her wits' end to know what to do

with her day. No doubt it is "the early bird that catches the worm"; but, as the pillow-loving boy said to his father, "it is the early worm that gets caught." Intemperance in early-rising, like every other excess, is sure to bring its penalty along with it. Nature will not be cheated out of her dues, and if they are not paid in season, she will exact them, with compound interest, out of season. It is well known that the early riser often compensates himself for his greeting to the dawn by frequent naps in the afternoon or evening. Josiah Quincy tells us in the "Life" of his father, that the latter rose every morning in winter and summer, for many years, at four o'clock. The effect of this outrage upon Nature was that he was sure to drop to sleep, wherever he was, when his mind was not actively occupied,—sometimes even in company, when the conversation flagged, and always as soon as he took his seat in his gig or sulky, in which he drove to town. John Quincy Adams, who was addicted to the same vice of intemperate early rising, with similar consequences, once accompanied him to the Harvard Law School, to hear Judge Story lecture. "Now Judge Story," continues the biographer, "did not accept the philosophy of his two friends in this particular, and would insist that it was a more excellent way to take out one's allowance of sleep in bed, and be wide awake when out of it,—which he himself most assuredly always was. The Judge received the two Presidents gladly, and placed them in the seat of honor on the dais by his side, fronting the class, and proceeded with his lecture. It was not long before, glancing his eye aside to see how his guests were impressed by his doctrine, he saw that they were both of them sound asleep, and he saw that the class saw it too.

Pausing a moment in his swift career of speech, he pointed to the two sleeping figures, and uttered these words of warning: 'Gentlemen, you see before you a melancholy example of the evil effects of early rising!' The shout of laughter with which this judicial *obiter dictum* was received effectually aroused the sleepers, and it is to be hoped that they heard and profited by the remainder of the discourse."

There is a class of moralists at the present day with whom it is a favorite dogma that no one can ever reach a high degree of goodness except by passing through a certain number of self-imposed trials. It has been justly said of such persons that their whole mind seems wrapt up in the office of polishing up little moral pins and needles, and running them into the most tender parts of their skins. It is chiefly men of this stamp who advocate the heresy of early rising. Were they content to stick pins into themselves, we would leave them to get all the moral discipline that is possible from the practice. But they insist on other persons imitating them; and what is more offensive, they are continually putting on airs on account of their eccentricity. Not content with "shaking hands with himself mentally," and thinking he has done a great thing, the early riser must vaunt himself of his achievements herein. Indeed, there are few things in the way of bragging that will compare with what an English essayist calls "the insulting triumph, the outrageous animation of the man who has dressed by candle-light in the month of December." It is not merely that he speaks of the exploit with a chuckle, or the

"— sort of satisfaction
Men feel when they've done a noble action."

but he looks down upon you who hug your pillow, with an air of superiority, as if you lacked moral backbone, or were a pigmy in virtue.

There is a caustic proverb, "We are all good risers at night," which strikingly shows how unnatural is this practice of getting up early. We have long been puzzled to account for the origin of so disagreeable a practice; but a recent English writer suggests an explanation which is as satisfactory as it is original and ingenious. For those who have to labor in the fields, or to get their living by hunting, there are obvious advantages in making the most of the daylight. Now philosophers have remarked that an instinct, like a physical organ, often survives after its original function has become unimportant. Animals retain rudimentary claws or wings which have become perfectly useless, a legacy from their remote ancestors; a dog still turns himself three times around before he lies down, because his great-great-grandfathers did so in the days when they were wild beasts, roaming amongst the long grass; and every tamed animal preserves for a time certain instincts which were useful to him only in his wild state. The sentiment about early rising is such a traditionary instinct, which has wandered into an era where it is not wanted.

LITERARY TRIFLERS.

A HISTORY of the misdirected labors of the human race would form one of the most curious and instructive, as well as one of the most voluminous, books that could be compiled. It would show that, while utility has been a sharp spur to human effort, difficulty and the love of praise have furnished motives equally powerful. Not to speak of the pyramids, those mountains of masonry, which, though costing the labors of thousands for many years, serve only as monuments of human folly; or of huge walls stretching along the length of an empire; or of the costly monuments reared to perpetuate the memory of things which men should be anxious to forget; or of the oceans of time wasted in the profitless researches of astrology, magic, quadrature of the circle, perpetual motion, etc.; let us glance for a few moments at some of the fruits of a similar folly in the literary world. Here, after all, will be found the most prodigal waste of time and labor, as the far-stretching Saharas of useless, and worse than useless, books that greet the eye in every Bodleian library will testify. There are authors who have written hundreds of volumes, folio, quarto, and octavo, full of the veriest commonplace, and which now not only sleep quietly and undisturbed on the shelves, but which respect for the human understanding compels us to believe could never have found even yawning readers.

Perhaps theology may claim to be the Arabia of literature, for here are far-reaching wastes or Great Deserts of books, in which, could he live as long as the antediluvians, one might travel for ages, without finding a single verdant spot to relieve the eye or cheat the painful journey. In one of the immense libraries of Continental Europe there is pointed out to the traveler one entire side of a long hall filled with nothing but treatises on a certain mystical point in divinity, all of which are now but so much old lumber, neglected even by the antiquary, and fit only for the pastry-cook or the trunk-maker. As space is limitless, and there are large chasms of it still unfilled by tangible bodies, it may seem cruel to grudge these writings the room they occupy. Yet one cannot but lament such an enormous waste of labor, nor with the utmost stretch of charity can he refrain from believing that, though Nature may have abhorred a vacuum in the days of Aristotle, her feelings must have greatly changed since mediocrity has filled it with so wretched apologies for substance and form.

The celebrated William Prynne, whose ears were cut off by Charles I, wrote about 200 books, nearly all elephantine folios or bulky quartos, not one of which the most inveterate literary mouser of our day ever peeps into. In 1786 the Rev. William Davy, an obscure curate in Devonshire, began writing a "System of Divinity," as he termed it, in twenty-six volumes, which, being unable to find a publisher, he resolved to print with his own hands. With a few old types and a press made by himself, he began the work of typography, printing only a page at a time. For twelve long years he pursued

his extraordinary labors, and at last, in 1807, brought them to a close. As each volume of the twenty-six octavo volumes of his work contained about 500 pages, he must have imposed and distributed his types, and put his press into operation 13,000 times, or considerably more than three times a day, omitting Sundays, during the long period of his task,— an amount of toil without remuneration which almost staggers belief. Only fourteen copies were printed, which he bound with his own hands, and a few of which he deposited in the public libraries of London. He died at an advanced age in 1826, hoping to the last for a favorable verdict from posterity, though even the existence of his *magnum opus*,— *magnum* in size only,— is probably not known to ten men in Great Britain.

But it is not in the literary productions of the eighteenth or nineteenth century, but in those of the sixteenth and seventeenth, that are to be found some of the most signal examples of misdirected intellectual labor. We refer to those torturing experiments upon language called anagrams, chronograms, echoes, macaronies, *bouts-rimés*, acrostics, palindromes, alliterative verses, etc., which were poured forth in floods, not by mere flippant idlers, or dunces who deemed themselves wits, but often by scholars of brilliant abilities and attainments. Weary of the search after ideas, disgusted with great speculations that ended in doubt, and dissatisfied with wisdom that brought no heart's ease, and knowledge that only increased sorrow, the thinking men of those ages, like their predecessors of more ancient times, often employed their leisure moments in the composition of laborious trifles,— *magno conatu magnas nugas*,— which mocked the fruits of their graver studies

with something of a fairy quaintness. Follies of this kind date back, indeed, almost to the invention of letters. The Greeks had their lipogrammatists, who could write elaborate poems or treatises from which a particular letter was excluded. An ancient poetaster wrote a paraphrase of the "Iliad," in which *alpha* or *a* was rejected from the first book, *beta* or *b* from the second, and so to the end. Both the Greeks and the Romans had their karkinie poems, or reciprocal verses, so written that the line was the same whether read backward or forward, as in the following:

"Roma, tibi, subito motibus ibit amor."

Lope de Vega wrote five novels, the first without an A, the second without a B, the third without a C, and so on. At one time, even long after the revival of learning, the grand merit of a large part of English and Scottish verse lay in the ridiculous conceit of all the words of a line beginning with the same letter; at another time, it was a favorite device to write Latin verses of which every line began with the same syllable that had concluded the preceding one,—a kind of game of shuttlecock, in which one player stationed on the left tossed a line across the page to a second, who, passing with the velocity of thought to the same side, hurled another at a third; and thus the match continued till he who began the sport put a stop to it by making his appearance on the opposite list. In this way the poor hapless poetaster was forced to hobble along an avenue, guarded on either side by a row of unrelenting monosyllables, which, if his mettlesome fancy manifested any inclination to scamper according to the freedom of her own will, brought her effectually to her senses.

But, of all the ridiculous shackles invented by the devotees of these coxcombical arts, the restrictions on the shape, form, and length of poems, were the most absurd and ludicrous. There are many poems of the sixteenth century on which a sort of Chinese ingenuity seems to have been expended; the lines being so drawn in here, and stretched out there,—so cut, twisted, and tortured in every conceivable way,—as to have a rude, general resemblance to the most fantastical objects. Of course, it was a rare triumph of ingenuity when an amatory poem could be squeezed into the shape of a heart, fan, or lady's gown; a still greater, perhaps, when a sonnet on destiny could be put into the figure of a pair of scissors; but when an anacreontic could be coaxed into the form of a wine-glass, or a meditation on mortality into the shape of an hour-glass or tombstone, the effect was absolutely overwhelming. One Benlowes, a wit who, though now forgotten, is said to have been "excellently learned in his day," had a wonderful facility in this kind of literary carpentry. Butler, the author of "Hudibras," thus ironically commends him in his "Character of a Small Poet": "There is no feat of activity, nor gambol of wit, that ever was performed by man, from him that vaults on Pegasus to him that tumbles through the hoop of an epigram, but Benlowes has got the mastery of it, whether it be high-rope wit or low-rope wit. As for *altars* and *pyramids* in poetry, he has outdone all men in that way; for he has made a gridiron and a frying-pan in verse, that, besides the likeness in shape, the very tone and sound of the words did perfectly represent the noise made by these utensils, such as *Sartago loquendi*."

Another excruciating exercise of wit, which was in

vogue in the sixteenth century, especially with those who could not aspire to the lofty art of shaped-verse-making, was the framing of *anagrams*. By the ancients, anagram-making, or the transposing of the letters of certain words so as to produce new words, was classed among the cabalistic sciences; and it was often thought that the qualities of a man's mind, and his future destiny, could be guessed at by anagrammatizing the letters of his name. When this could be done in such a way as to bring forth a word or sentence pointedly allusive to the original idea, it was deemed a marvellous feat, and the happy wit was ready to scream with joy. In France, such weight was attached to this jugglery with letters, that Louis XIII pensioned a professional transposer of words. Occasionally a name would appear to defy all attempts to torture it into meaning, and the pains and throes of the anagrammatist, while in labor, were sometimes terrible to behold. The venerable Camden speaks of the difficulty as "a whetstone of patience to them that shall try the art. For some have beene seene to bite their pen, scratch their head, bend their browes, bite their lips, beate the boord, teare their paper, when they were faire for somewhat, and caught nothing therein." Addison gives a most ludicrous account of one of these word-torturers, who, after shutting himself up for half a year, and having taken certain liberties with the name of his mistress, discovered, on presenting his anagram, that he had *misspelled her surname!* by which misfortune he was so thunderstruck that he shortly after lost his senses. If ever an explosion of wrath were justifiable, and one might be excused for losing all self-command, and crying out with Hamlet,

"—Ay, turn thy complexion there,
Patience, thou young and rose-lipped cherubin,'

it must be in a case like that.

Almost as unhappy as this was the experience of Daniel Dove, who, after long brooding over his own name, was able to hatch from it the ominous presage, "leaden void." Knowing that, with a change of one letter, he might have become "Ovid," he felt like the man whose lottery-ticket was next in number to the £20,000 prize. Sometimes from the same name may be extracted both good and evil omens, as in the case of Eleanor Davies, wife of the poet, and the Cassandra of her age, who belonged to the Court of Charles II. Having extracted the quintessence of her own name, and finding in it the impure anagram, "Reveal, O Daniel!" she began to croak prophecies by no means agreeable to the Government, when she was silenced by an arrow drawn from her own quiver. She was arraigned before the Court of High Commission, the Judges of which vainly racked their brains for arguments to disprove her claims to inspiration, when luckily it occurred to one of them to take his pen and write a letter anagram upon her name: Dame Eleanor Davies: "*Never so mad a ladie!*"—which, hoisting the engineer with his own petard, forever silenced the prophecies. The ingenuity of the Judge is only paralleled by that of John Bunyan, whose anagram on his own name, "Nu hony in a B," is a masterly triumph over the difficulties of orthography.

"The anagram," says Richelet, "is one of the greatest follies of the human mind. One must be a fool to be amused by them, and worse than a fool to make them." Drummond, of Hawthornden, denounces the anagram as

"the most idle study in the world of learning. Their maker must be *homo miserrimæ patientiae*, and when he is done, what is it but *magno conatu nugas magnas agere!*" Happy, therefore, he thought, was that countryman of his, whose mistress's name, being *Anna Grame*, contained a ready-made and most acceptable Anagram. Considering that not a few men of high repute,— illustrious scholars and thinkers even,— have tried their hand at this "*ineptie de l'esprit humain*," these must be considered as somewhat exaggerated statements. The anagram is a triumphant answer to the question, "What's in a name?" especially when by a slight transposition *a Wit* is found in WIAT, *Renown* in VERNON, and *Laurel* in WALLER. Though anagrams are not the grandest productions of human genius, yet the intellectual ingenuity that is sometimes displayed in resolving a word into its elements, and from these elements compounding some new word characteristic of the person or thing designated by the original, is quite surprising. For example, what can be more curious than the coincidence between Telegraphs and its anagram, viz.: *great helps?* So of Astronomers,— *moon-starers;* Penitentiary,—*Nay, I repent it*; Radical Reform,— *Rare mad frolic.* Hardly less felicitous are the following: Presbyterian,—*best in prayer;* Gallantries,—*all great sin;* Old England,— *golden land.* Some years ago there was an eminent physician in London, whose name, John Abernethy, on account of his bluntness and roughness, was metamorphosed into "Johnny the Bear." It is probable that even "Ursa Major" himself smiled and growled at the same time when he first heard this witty anagram.

Few persons will yield to the logic of political anagrams, but it is impossible not to be struck by the famous

Frantic Disturbers, made from Francis Burdett; and, in an ignorant age, doubtless not a few persons were confirmed in their dogged adherence to the Pretender to the British throne, while his enemies were startled and confounded, by the coincidence of Charles James Stuart with his anagram, *He asserts a true claim.* The two finest anagrams ever made are: *Honor est a Nilo* (Honor is from the Nile), from Horatio Nelson; and the reply evolved from Pilate's question, "*Quid est veritas?*" (What is truth?) "*Vir est qui adest*" (It is the man who stands before you.) The following, written by Oldys, the bibliographer, and found by his executors among his manuscripts, will be regarded by many as "quaintly good," to use an expression of Isaak Walton's:

> "In word and WILL I AM a friend to you,
> And one friend OLD IS worth a hundred new."

The Greeks made few anagrams, and the Romans despised them. Nearly all Latin anagrams are of modern manufacture; as, from corpus (body) porcus (pig), from logica (logic) caligo (darkness). The French have invented a few very happy anagrams, of which a remarkably ingenious one is that on Frère Jacques Clement, the assassin of Henri III, "C'est l'enfer qui m'a créé." What can be more beautiful than the anagram on the name of Christ, in allusion to the passage in Isaiah liii, "He is brought as a sheep to the slaughter"?

> "*ΙΗΣΟΥΣ.*
> *Σὺ ἠ ὀῖς — Thou art that sheep.*"

Rousseau, ashamed of his father, who was a cobbler, changed his name into Verniettes,—in which a wit discovered more than the author had dreamed of, namely,

Tu te renies. Voltaire's name is an anagram, derived from his real name, *Arouet l. j.*, or *Arouet le jeune.* As a specimen of a witty anagram, there is one on Charles Genest, a Frenchman of much note, which is, as Mrs. Partington would say, "a chief-done-over;" it is unrivaled. The gentleman in question was distinguished by a preternaturally large organ of smell, such as would have thrown Napoleon Bonaparte or Eden Warwick into raptures of admiration, — whereupon some ingenious wag finds in his name the mirth-provoking anagram, "*Eh? c'est un grand nez!*" (Eh? it is a great nose!)

One of the prettiest of modern anagrams is the following:

'FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE,
Flit on, charming angel!"

When the eloquent George Thompson was urged to go into Parliament to serve the cause of negro emancipation more efficiently, one of his friends found a cogent reason for such a course in the letters of his name:

"GEORGE THOMPSON,
O go,—the Negro's M. P.!"

A patriotic Englishman made Napoleon Bonaparte read in Latin, *Bona rapta leno pone*, or "Rascal, yield up your stolen possessions." The last anagram we shall cite, though less brilliant than the foregoing, as a mere feat of intellectual ingenuity, is wonderfully truthful,—namely, editors, who are always *so tired.*

Another curious phase of literary labor is alliteration, which may be a mere trick or conceit of composition, or a positive ornament. When used too often it is suggestive of laborious efforts, and affects the reader like the feats of an acrobat, which excite at last an interest more painful

than pleasant. But, when used with such subtle art as to be noticed only by the peculiar charm of sound that accompanies it, it is one of the most delicate graces of language. Spenser uses alliteration often, and sometimes with the finest effect, as in the "Shepherd's Calendar":

> "But home him hasted with furious heate,
> Encreasing his wrathe with many a threate;
> His harmeful hatchet he hent in hand."

In the following verse of Tennyson, there is an alliterative beauty in the pleasant interlinking of the sounds of *d*, and *n*, and *l*, which is peculiarly delicious to the ear, because it is so subtle as hardly to be noticed by a common reader:

> "Dip down upon the Northern shore,
> Oh, sweet new year, delaying long;
> Thou dost expectant nature wrong,
> Delaying long,—delay no more."

Shakspeare has occasional instances of happy alliteration, as in

> "The churlish chiding of the winter's wind";

and again in the line,

> "In maiden meditation, fancy-free;"

and in the following passage from "Macbeth," where the grandeur of the effect is greatly increased by the repetition of the letter *s*:

> "That shall, to all our nights and days to come,
> Give solely sovereign sway and masterdom."

The poet ridicules, however, the excessive use of this device, as in the prologue to the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe in "Midsummer Night's Dream":

> "Whereat with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
> He bravely broached his boiling bloody breast."

Alliteration adds not a little to the force of Burns's word-painting, as when he calls Tam O'Shanter

"A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum,"

and characterizes the plowman's collie as

"A rhymin', rantin', rovin' billie."

Byron was a great master of alliteration. It was a favorite device of his, and his finest passages, whether grave or gay, owe much of their beauty and power to it. E. g.—

"He who hath bent him o'er the dead,
Ere the first day of death has fled,
The first dark day of nothingness,
The last of danger and distress."

In the "Corsair" he has thirty-one alliterations in twenty-three lines, yet so skilfully used that the reader is conscious of no mannerism. What an addition of pungency and comic effect is given to the epigram by this expedient, may be seen by the following lines from Byron's "English Bards and Scotch Reviewers":

"Yet mark one caution, ere thy next review
Spreads its light wings of saffron and of blue,
*B*eware lest *b*lundering *B*rough'm destroy the sale,
Turn *b*eef to *b*annocks, *c*auliflowers to *k*ail!"

Coleridge was an adept in the use of this rhyming ornament, as a single example will suffice to show:

"The white breeze blew, the white foam flew,
The furrow followed free."

Professor G. P. Marsh states that Milton, and the classic school of poets generally, avoid alliteration altogether; but this is too sweeping a statement, as, had we space, we might easily show. How much the alliteration adds to the expressiveness of his

"Behemoth, biggest born of earth!"

and how greatly is the force of the following lines intensified by the same device, where he strings together his vowels and consonants in juxtaposition, so as to make the verse more harsh and grating to the ear:

> "Others apart sat on a hill retired,
> For thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
> Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate,
> *F*ixed *f*ate, *f*ree will, *f*oreknowledge absolute."

The most brilliant poets of the day abound in this device, and even the most accomplished prose-writers do not disdain what Churchill calls

> "Apt alliteration's artful aid."

In the following lines, by Austin, we have an almost excessive use of it:

> "You knew Blanche Darley? Could we but once more
> *B*ehold that *b*elle and pet of '54!
> Not e'en a whisper, vagrant up to Town
> From hunt or race-ball, augur'd her renown.
> *F*ar in the wolds sequester'd life she led,
> *F*air and un*f*ettered as the *f*awn she *f*ed,
> *C*aress'd the *c*alves, *c*oquetted with the *c*olts,
> *B*estowed much *t*enderness on *t*urkey polts;
> *B*ullied the huge, ungainly *b*loodhound pup,
> *T*iff'd with the *t*errier, coax'd to make it up:
> The farmers quizzed about the ruin'd crops,
> The fall of barley and the rise of hops.
> *S*o *s*oft her tread, no nautilus that *s*kims
> With *s*ail more *s*ilent than her *l*iquid *l*imbs.
> Her presence was low music; when she went
> She left behind a *d*reamy *d*iscontent,
> As *s*ad as *s*ilence, when a *s*ong is *s*pent."

In irony, satire, and all kinds of comic writing, — and even in invective, — alliteration adds a peculiar piquancy to the comic effect. Thus Grattan, denouncing the British ministry, said: "Their only means of government are the guinea and the gallows." Sydney Smith

employs this feature of style with masterly skill and effect; as when he speaks of an opponent as "a polyphagous, poluposous, and pot-bellied scribbler"; and when, in contrasting the position of the poor curates with that of the high dignitaries of the English Church, he calls the two classes "the Rt. Rev. Dives in the palace, and Lazarus in orders at the gate, doctored by dogs and comforted with crumbs." A still more striking instance is an ironical passage in the "Letters of Peter Plymley," in which, ridiculing a measure of Mr. Perceval, the British Premier, he asks: "At what period was the plan of conquest and constipation fully developed? In whose mind was the idea of destroying the pride and plasters of France first engendered? . . . Depend upon it, the absence of the materia medica will soon bring them to their senses, and the cry of '*Bourbon and Bolus!*' burst forth from the Baltic to the Mediterranean."

Proverbs owe much of their piquancy and point to alliteration, and favorite passages of poetry owe their frequency of quotation not a little to this element, which greatly aids in their recollection. Two hundred years ago John Norris wrote the line

"Like angels' visits, short and bright,"

which Blair, half a century later, improved into

"Visits, like those of angels, short and far between";

but Campbell, unconsciously appropriating it, "contrived at one blow to destroy the beauty of the thought, and yet to make the verse immortal by giving it a form that soothes the ear and runs glibly off the tongue":

"Like angels' visits, few and far between,"

— a line which is palpably tautological.

The following is probaoly the most remarkable specimen of alliteration extant. Any one who has written an acrostic, and who has felt the embarrassment of being confined to particular initial letters, can appreciate the ingenuity demanded by these verses, where the whole alphabet is fathomed, and each word in each line exacts its proper initial. The author must have been "*homo miserrimæ patientiæ*":

"An Austrian army, awfully arrayed,
Boldly, by battery, besieged Belgrade.
Cossack commanders cannonading come,
Dealing destruction's devastating doom:
Every endeavor engineers essay,
For fame, for fortune — fighting furious fray:
Generals 'gainst generals grapple — great God!
How honors Heaven heroic hardihood!
Infuriate — indiscriminate in ill,
Kinsmen kill kinsmen — kindred kindred kill!
Labor low levels loftiest, longest lines —
Men march 'mid mounds, 'mid moles, 'mid murderous mines.
New noisy numbers notice nought
Of outward obstacles, opposing ought:
Poor patriots, partly purchased, partly pressed,
Quite quaking, quickly quarter, quarter 'quest;
Reason returns, religion's right redounds,
Suwarrow stops such sanguinary sounds.
Truce to the Turk — triumph to thy train!
Unjust, unwise, unmerciful Ukrane!
Vanish vain victory, vanish victory vain!
Why wish we warfare, wherefore welcome were
Xerxes, Ximenes, Xanthus, Xaviere?
Yield, ye youths! ye yeomen, yield your yell!
Zeno's, Zarpater's, Zoroaster's zeal,
And all attracting — against arms appeal."

Alliteration occurs sometimes in the writings of the ancients, but not, it is supposed, designedly, as they regarded all echoing of sound as a rhetorical blemish. Cicero, in the "Offices," has this phrase,— "Sensim sine

sensu ætas senescit"; and Virgil, in the "Æneid," has many marked alliterations.

There are several Latin poems of the Middle Ages in alliterative verse, the most famous of which, the *Pugna Porcorum per Publium Porcium Poetam*, or "Battle of the Pigs," in which every word begins with *p*, extends to several hundred lines, thus,—

> "Propterea properans proconsul, poplite prono,
> Precipitem plebem pro patrum pace poposcit,
> Persta paulisper pubes preciosa! precamur."

Among the literary devices which have "fretted their brief hour upon the stage, and now are no more," are double rhymes, in which Butler and Hood especially excelled. A still more ludicrous form of comic verse is where the rhyme is made by dividing the words, being formed by a similar sound in the middle syllables; as in Canning's lines;—

> "Thou wast the daughter of my *Tu*-
> tor, Law Professor in the *U*-
> niversity of Göttingen;

or in Smith's

> "At first I caught hold of the *wing*,
> And kept away; but Mr. *Thing*-
> umbob, the prompter man,
> Gave with his hand my chaise a shove,
> And said, 'Go on, my pretty love,
> Speak to 'em, little Nan.'"

Akin to the waste of labor in anagrams, chronograms, alliterations, assonances, etc., though not strictly to be classed under literary trifles, is the waste of labor upon microscopic penmanship. Years of toil have been devoted to copying in a minute print-hand books which could have been bought for a trifle in ordinary typography. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, one Peter Bales wrote a

copy of the Bible, with the usual number of pages, in a hand so fine that the whole could be put into a walnut-shell. In St. John's College, Oxford, there is shown a portrait of Charles I, done with the pen in such a way that the lines are formed by verses of the Psalms, all of which are included in the work. When Charles II visited the College, he asked for it, with the promise to grant any favor in return; the request was granted, and the owners immediately asked to have the gift restored to them. In the British Museum there is a portrait of Queen Anne, on which appear a number of minute lines and scratches. These, when examined through a microscope, are found to be the entire contents of a small folio-book which belongs to the library. Some years ago a gentleman in London bought a pen-and-ink portrait of Alexander Pope, surrounded by a design in scroll-work. Upon examining it through a glass, to discover the artist's name, he was astonished to find that the fine lines in the surrounding scroll were a biography of the poet, so minutely transcribed as to be legible only by the aid of a magnifier.

Another literary trifle upon which a vast amount of time and ingenuity has been expended, is the riddle. Riddle-making has been popular in all ages and countries, and not only the small wits, but the big-wigs, of Greece, Rome, France, Germany, and England, have amused themselves with it. Schiller, the German poet, was an adept in this art, and some of his riddles are marvels of ingenuity. Here is one by Fox, the great English orator:

"Formed long ago, yet made to-day,
And most employed when others sleep;
What few would wish to give away,
And none would wish to keep."

The answer is — a bed.

Dr. Whewell, the late Master of Trinity College, is credited with the following, which was often on his lips. It would baffle a sphynx:

"U 0 a 0, but I 0 thee,
O 0 no 0, but O 0 me;
Then let not my 0 a 0 go,
But give 0 0 I 0 thee so."

"You sigh for a cypher, but I sigh for thee,
O sigh for no cypher, but O sigh for me;
Then let not my sigh for a cypher go,
But give sigh for sigh, for I sigh for thee so."

Whew—well done! we hear a punning reader exclaim.

The following is inferior to the sighing riddle, so often repeated to his friends by the author of the "History of Inductive Sciences," but it is not the device of a bungler:

"Stand take to takings.
I you throw my"

"I understand
You undertake
To overthrow
My undertakings."

Prof. De Morgan, author of the celebrated work on "The Theory of Probabilities," is the author of a cunning punning riddle: How do you know there is no danger of starving in the desert? Because of the *sand which is* there. And how do you know you will get sandwiches there? Because *Ham* went into the desert, and his descendants *bred* and *mustered.*

The following curious epitaph was found in a foreign cathedral:

"EPITAPHIUM.
O quid tuæ
be est biæ;
ra ra ra
es et in
ram ram ram
i i."

These puzzling lines have been explained as follows: *Ra, ra, ra*, is thrice *ra*, i. e., *ter-ra — terra; ram, ram, ram*, is thrice *ram*, i. e., *ter-ram — terram; i i* is twice *i i*, i. e., *i-bis — ibis*. The first two lines are to be read: *O super* be, quid *super* est tuæ *super* biæ. The epitaph will then be:

"O superbe, quid superest tuæ superbiæ?
Terra es et in terram ibis."

We know not who is the author of the following curious line:

"Sator arepo tenet opera rotas."

1. This spells backward and forward the same. 2. The first letters of all the words spell the first word. 3. The second letters of all the words spell the second word. 4. The third letters of all the words spell the third word; and so on through the fourth and fifth.

We will close with a specimen of the puzzles in letters:

"CC
SI"

"The season is backward." (The C's on is backward.)

Truly the human mind is like an elephant's trunk,—capable of grasping the mightiest objects, and of adapting itself with equal facility to the meanest and most trifling. There is but one thing to which we can compare the labors of this whole tribe of triflers,—it is to the toils of those unwearying imps who were set by the magician to the task of twisting ropes out of sea-sand.

WRITING FOR THE PRESS.

ALMOST every person who is a known contributor to the press receives, more or less often, letters like the following: "I am not earning enough to pay my expenses, and, to make the two ends meet, I would like to write for the press. Can you give me some hints?" The number of persons who, when at their wits' ends, in despair of eking out a living in any other way, look to journalism as a last resource, is legion. The passionate appeals which are made personally or by letter to the managing-editor of a leading journal, beseeching him to buy articles, nine-tenths of which are utterly worthless, and ninety-nine hundredths of which could not be got into the paper, were they ever so interesting, make his place anything but a bed of roses. Even in the old-fashioned newspaper-establishments, where four or five steep, dark, and dingy stair-cases must be climbed to reach the editorial den, some would-be contributor, male or female, may be seen panting up the steps almost hourly; but, in the modern offices, in which the steam-elevator has placed all the floors on a level, the swarms of writers that beset the manager, coaxing, imploring, almost insisting, that their MSS. shall be used, render his situation absolutely appalling. To ninety-nine out of every hundred of these persons he must return an inexorable No. No would-be contributor, however, dreams that *he* is doomed to be one of the ninety-nine; and be-

cause it is useless, therefore, to begin with *Punch's* advice to those about to marry, "Don't!" we offer the following suggestions:

First, consider well whether you have the peculiar qualifications required in a newspaper-writer. Writing for the press has grown to be an art by itself; it is one whose rules and principles, like those of music, sculpture, and painting, must be mastered by intense, patient, and persistent study by those who aspire to success. To write a really good editorial or contribution is like scaling an Alp, which, in its clearness of atmosphere, seems so near, and yet is so far and so hard of ascent.

It is a great mistake to suppose that, because the greater includes the less, the talents which qualify a man to write a first-rate book will make him a good article-writer. Many an author of reputation, who has reasoned thus, has started off brilliantly in the career of journalism; but, after a little smart writing and display of bookish ability, has "fallen flat and shamed his worshipers," because he could not seize and condense the spirit and moral of passing history. As Carlyle complains of the needle-women of England, that there are seamstresses few or none, but botchers in abundance, capable only of "a distracted puckering and botching,— not sewing, only a fallacious hope of it, a fond imagination of the mind"; so in literary labor, especially journalism, it is but too true that there are many botchers, and few skilled workmen,— very little good article-writing, and a deal of "distracted puckering and botching." It is true there is no mystery in the craft when we have once learned it, as there is none in walking on a tight-rope, turning a double back-summersault, or vaulting through a hoop

upon a running horse. The difficulty is,— to learn. It may seem a very easy thing to trim a bonnet; but hundreds of expert workmen, who can do things far more difficult and complicated, fail utterly when they try to trim a bonnet. A man may be a brilliant review or magazine writer, and yet not show a particle of skill or tact in conducting a daily or weekly newspaper. It is one thing to elaborate an article at leisure, "with malice prepense and aforethought," in one's study, hedged in by books on every side, with other "appliances and means to boot"; and quite another to cope with the hydrostatic pressure, the prompt selection of salient points, and the rapid, glancing treatment of them, demanded by a daily journal.

Which, indeed, are the most popular papers of the day? Is it the journals that are filled mainly with long and ponderous disquisitions that smell of the lamp; articles crammed with statistics, and useful knowledge of the "penny-magazine" stamp, which it is more painful to read than it was to write them? No; they are, almost without exception, those whose merit lies in condensation; which, with full reports of news, and a limited number of elaborate discussions, give the *apices rerum*, the cream and quintessence of things; whose pithy paragraphs, squeezed into the smallest possible space, may be taken in by the eye while the reader is occupied in discussing a cup of coffee, or devoured like a sandwich between two mouthfuls of bread and butter. These are the papers which are sought for with avidity, and devoured with keen relish; which are passed from hand to hand, and read till they are worn out; and to serve up the spicy repast they furnish, is a Sisyphan task, which requires

ceaseless industry and a peculiar combination of talents which not one educated man in a thousand possesses.

It is the lack of these talents and the neglect of these principles which explain the failure of so many newspapers and newspaper-writers. The rock on which they split is ignorance or forgetfulness of the very *end* of a newspaper. The first thought which should be uppermost in the mind of every writer for the press is that this "map of busy life" is a thing not to be read or studied, but to be glanced over. The contents must be such as at once to catch the attention. Take care, then, at the beginning, not to frighten the reader by a long article. Big guns make a loud noise, but rifle-balls often do the greatest execution. A tremendous thought may be packed into a small compass, made as solid as a cannon-ball, and cut down everything before it. "A brief ejaculation," says South, "may be a big and a mighty prayer"; and a ten-line paragraph,— a single thought, pungently presented,— may change a man's convictions in politics or religion, or be a seed-corn to fructify through his whole life. An ideal newspaper article is not an exhaustive essay, but a brief monogram, for which one positive and central idea is sufficient. As Virgil says of farms: "Admire long articles; cultivate short ones."

To achieve this, make sure that you have something to say, and say it only when you are in the vein,— in your best mood. Are you a clergyman? Don't write on "blue Monday," when you feel like a mouse in an exhausted receiver. Why rush before fifty thousand readers when you feel so stupid that you can't prepare a sermon for five hundred hearers? Waste no time on introductions. Don't begin by laying out your subject

like a Dutch flower-garden, or telling your motives for writing. Nobody cares how you came to think of your theme, or why you write upon it. Sink rhetoric, and throw Blair and Campbell to the winds. Copy Milton, who does not stop to invoke his Muse till he has first announced his theme, "of man's first disobedience and the fall." Plunge at once into the very middle of your subject, and "pluck out the heart of its mystery." The first end is to excite attention. The keynote should be struck, if possible, in the very first sentence. A dull beginning often damns an article; a spicy one, that whets the appetite by a prime, juicy slice right out of the middle of the coming joint, often commends an article to both editor and reader. Be brief and crisp, giving results only, not processes,—suggesting argument rather than stating it. Don't serve up with the pearl the oyster and the shell.

Put your points clearly and sharply; don't cover them up with verbiage, but let them stick out. Macaulay well says that a bold, dashing, scene-painting manner is that which always succeeds best in periodical writing. Let your sentences be electrically charged. Let every word leap with life, and blot out every one which does not help to clench the meaning. Condense,—condense,—condense. Ignore all inferences, and regard explanatory sentences as a nuisance. Some writers always explain a thing to death. Throw subordinate thoughts to the dogs. Thin your fruit that the tree may not be exhausted, and that some of it may come to perfection. Above all, stop when you are done. Don't let the ghost of your thought wander about after the death of the body. Aim to be suggestive, not exhaustive, and leave the reader to draw

many inferences for himself. Take for granted, after all your condensation, that your article is twice too long. Leave off the beginning and the conclusion, and make the middle as short as possible. Cutting it down may require nerve, but it is the compactness which makes it do execution. Lastly, lay aside your paper, if possible, for a week, and then retouch it; strengthen its weak points, and polish its rough ones. Too many article-writers grudge the toil which is necessary to perfect their contributions. They quote Taine, who condemns transitions, elegances of style, "the whole literary wardrobe," to the old-clothes shop. "The age demands ideas, not arrangement of ideas; the pigeon-holes are manufactured; fill them." True, in a certain sense; but ideas, like soldiers, owe their force largely to their arrangement. Thoughts become different thoughts when expressed in different language. Other newspaper-writers believe in fast writing, which is generally apt to be hard reading. The thought, they say, should be struck off in the passion of the moment; the sword-blade must go red-hot to the anvil, and be forged in a few seconds, not by piecemeal, if you would have it of heavenly temper. Granted; but, after the forging, long and weary polishing and grinding must follow before your sword-blade will cut. What would you think of a cutler who should say, "I turn out knives with great facility, but I cannot stop to give them an edge?" Cassius Etruscius boasted that he could write two hundred pages before dinner, and as many after. He was burned, as he deserved to be, on a pile of his own productions.

We have said nothing of the mechanical parts of an article. That it should be written legibly, on one side

of small-sized sheets, with careful punctuation and spelling, and plenty of paragraphs, is generally known. We might add other useful hints; but enough. Follow the directions we have given, and, if you have a soul that fires with great thoughts, and fears not to utter them freely, you may wield with the pen a power that no sceptre can rival. But, if you have no enthusiasm or inspiration, and can't put fire into your writings, you would better put your writings into the fire. If you don't do so, and your article goes to "Balaam's box," don't fly into a passion and call the editor a fool, or assert that he is prejudiced. Mothers are always partial to their deformed children, and authors think most highly of their rickety literary bantlings. Don't waste a moment's time in vindicating your productions against editors or critics, but expend your energies in writing something which shall be its own vindication.

Finally, do you feel, on reading these hints, as did Rasselas when he had listened to the detail of the qualifications necessary to a poet, and exclaimed: "Who, then, can be a poet?" We confess it is the picture of an ideal article-writer that we have drawn; but, though the conception that haunts our brain is one which we have been utterly unable to realize,—though our ideal, after many weary years' pursuit, still flies before us like the horizon, and mocks us with its unattainable charm,—we still have the satisfaction of knowing that our readers yawn less frequently than if we had adopted a lower and more easily-reached standard.

STUDY OF THE MODERN LANGUAGES.

THAT the study of foreign languages is a necessary part of a liberal education is a proposition which few intelligent persons will at this day dispute. The records of thought and knowledge are many tongued; and, therefore, as a means of encyclopædic culture,—of that thorough intellectual equipment which is so imperiously demanded of every scholar, and even thinker, at the present day,—a knowledge of foreign literature, both ancient and modern, is absolutely indispensable.

Familiarity with foreign languages liberalizes the mind in the same way as foreign travel. The Emperor Charles V once said that to learn a new language was to acquire a new soul. The man who is familiar only with the writers of his native tongue is in danger of confounding what is accidental with what is essential, and of supposing that manners and customs, tastes and habits of thought, which belong only to his own age and country, are inseparable from the nature of man. Acquainting himself with foreign literatures, he finds that opinions which he had thought to be universal, and feelings which he had supposed instinctive, have been unknown to millions. He thus loses that Chinese cast of mind, that contempt for everything outside of his own narrow circle, which was a foe to all self-knowledge and to all self-improvement. He doubts where he formerly dogmatized; he tolerates where he formerly execrated. Qualifying the sentiments of the

writers of his own age and country with the thoughts and sentiments of writers in other ages and other countries, he ceases to bow slavishly to the authority of those who breathe the same atmosphere with himself, and with whose idiosyncrasies he is *en rapport*. He declines henceforth to accept their opinions, to make their tastes his tastes, and their prejudices his prejudices, and thus avoids that mental slavery which is baser than the slavery of the body.

While we thus appreciate the value of linguistic studies to the few who have the time and money for thorough culture, we yet doubt whether the study of foreign languages, to the extent that fashion now exacts, is wise or profitable. That an Englishman, Frenchman, or German, even though a business man, should deem a knowledge of them not only useful, but even vital to his worldly success, we can understand. There is hardly a commercial house of any note in England that does not sell goods to Germany, France, Switzerland, Sweden, or Russia; hence every such house must have *employés* to conduct its foreign correspondence, and a knowledge of foreign tongues is, therefore, one of the best recommendations with which a young man seeking a clerkship can be armed. The same is true of Germany and France; but who will pretend that such is the fact in this country? If, instead of all speaking a common tongue, the Eastern, Northern, Southern, Western, and Middle States of our country spoke as many languages, the lingual necessities of our merchants and manufacturers would be similar to those of the great business houses of Europe; but, as the facts are, no such necessities exist. It is true we have a few houses that do business with Europe: and it is true, also, that in a few of our largest cities. there are many foreigners who cannot speak English; but,

everywhere else, linguistic knowledge is of little practical use.

The question is not whether a knowledge of French and German is desirable *per se*, but whether it is not too dearly purchased. Is it worth the heavy tax which our youth pay for it? Cannot the weary days, weeks, months, and even years, which are spent in acquiring what, after all, is usually but the merest smattering of those tongues, be more profitably spent upon English literature and the sciences? There is hardly any subject upon which so much illusion prevails as upon the supposed ease with which a modern language can be mastered. We hear it daily remarked that French and Italian are very easy, and that German, though presenting some difficulties, is by no means hard to acquire. Now the truth, to which, sooner or later, every student is forced to open his eyes, is, that the acquisition of any language, as Mr. Lincoln said of the crushing of the Rebellion, is "a big job." The mastering of a foreign tongue, even the easiest, is the work, not of a day, but of years, and years of stern, unremitting toil.

It is true that Mr. Macaulay undertook (we know not with what success) to possess himself of the German language during a four months' voyage from India to Europe; but have we not the authority of the same Mr. Macaulay for the statement that Frederick the Great, after reading, speaking, writing French, and nothing but French, during more than half a century,—after unlearning his mother tongue in order to learn French,—after living familiarly many years with French associates,—could not, to the last, compose in French, without imminent risk of committing some mistake which would have moved a smile in the literary circles of Paris? Mr. Hamerton, the author of

"The Intellectual Life,"—a most competent judge,—lays down the following two propositions, tested by a large experience, as unassailable: 1. Whenever a foreign language is perfectly acquired, there are peculiar family conditions. The person has either married a person of the other nation, or is of mixed blood. 2. A language cannot be learned by an adult without five years' residence in the country where it is spoken; and, without habits of close observation, a residence of twenty years is insufficient. Mr. Hamerton further adds that one of the most accomplished of English linguists remarked to him that, after much observation of the labors of others, he had come to the rather discouraging conclusion that it was not possible to learn a foreign language.

This is an extreme position; but, if by "learning a language" is meant a thorough acquisition of it, so that one can speak and write it like a native, we believe that the statement is impregnable. Of course, we except the few prodigies of linguistic genius,—the Magliabecchis and the Mezzofantes, of whom but one appears in a century,—men who, as De Quincey says, in the act of dying, commit a robbery, absconding with a valuable polyglot dictionary.

Will it be said in reply, that a knowledge of a foreign language may fall short of perfection, yet be of great practical and even educational value? We admit it; we admit that there are men who learn many languages sufficiently for certain practical purposes, and yet never thoroughly master the grammar of one. Such a man was Goethe. Easily excited to throw his energy in a new direction, as his biographer tells us, he had not the patience which begins at the beginning, and rises gradually, slowly, into assured mastery. Like an eagle, he swooped down upon

his prey; he could not watch for it with cat-like patience. But though Goethe had no critical knowledge of foreign languages,— was but an indifferent linguist,— he had what was better for his own purposes, the divining instinct of genius, which enabled him to seize upon and appropriate the spirit of compositions, to a knowledge of which other men attain only by a critical study of the letter. But Goethe's method is one that can be safely followed only by those who have Goethe's genius. For the mass of students there is no royal road, no safe short-cut, to a language. The Duke of Wellington, when asked how he spoke French, replied, "With the greatest intrepidity;" and so he fought at Waterloo; but it was not till, after years of patient toil, he had mastered the art of war. Intrepidity is an indispensable thing; but it is not reasonable, if possible, till after one has conquered all the difficulties of the idiom. A mastery far short of this may be very serviceable; but we do not believe that the smattering which the great majority of our young men and women get,— and *which is all they can get in most cases*,— can possibly enrich them intellectually.

As Mr. Hamerton justly urges, until you can really *feel the refinements of a language*, you can get little help or furtherance from it of any kind,— nothing but an interminable series of misunderstandings. "True culture ought to strengthen the faculty of thinking, and to provide the material upon which that noble faculty may operate. An accomplishment which does neither of these two things for us is useless for our culture, though it may be of considerable practical convenience in the affairs of ordinary life." In the weighty words of Milton: "Though a man should pride himself to have all the tongues that Babel cleft the

world into, yet if he have not studied the solid things in them, he were nothing so much to be esteemed a learned man, as any yeoman or tradesman competently wise in his mother dialect only."

He is a poor economist who looks only at the value of an acquisition without counting the cost. If a young man can begin his studies early and continue them till his twenty-first year, by all means let him study French and German. But in no case would we have him study those tongues at the expense of utter ignorance or the merest surface-knowledge of his own language and its literature, and of the physical sciences. That the two latter branches of knowledge are far more essential than the former to both his success and happiness, we cannot doubt. Unfortunately, the majority of our young men are compelled to plunge into business so early that they are forced to elect between the two acquisitions; they cannot have both. For such persons to choose the French and German, and neglect the sciences and their own noble tongue and its literature, is as absurd as it would be for a laborer to stint himself all the year in meat or bread that he may enjoy a few baskets of strawberries in April. We yield to no one in our admiration of Montaigne, Pascal, Molière, Cuvier, and Sainte-Beuve, or of Goethe, Schiller, Lessing, Richter, and Heine; but we do, nevertheless, echo most heartily the words of Thomas De Quincey,—himself a consummate linguist,—when he declares that it is a pitiable spectacle to see young persons neglecting the golden treasures of their own literature, and wasting their time on German, French and Italian authors, comparatively obscure, and immeasurably inferior in quality. (See p. 22.)

The same writer has admirably explained the secret of

this strange preference,—a preference with which fashion has doubtless as much to do as the cause he names: "It is the habit (well known to psychologists) of transferring to anything created by our own skill, or which reflects our own skill, as if it lay causatively and objectively in the thing itself, that pleasurable power which in very truth belongs subjectively to the mind of him who surveys it, from conscious success in the exercise of his own energies. Hence it is that we see daily without surprise young ladies hanging enamored over the pages of an Italian author, and calling attention to trivial commonplaces, such as, clothed in plain mother English, would have been more repulsive to them than the distinctions of a theologian or the counsels of a great-grandmother. They mistake for a pleasure yielded by the author what is in fact the pleasure attending their own success in mastering what was lately an insuperable difficulty."

We are fully convinced that even the literary man, though he cannot dispense with a familiarity with the modern languages, pays a high price for his knowledge. Here, as everywhere else, the law of compensation holds. Familiarity with foreign idioms almost invariably injures an author's style. We know that the Romans, in exact proportion to their study of Greek, paralyzed some of the finest powers of their own language. Schiller tells us that he was in the habit of reading as little as possible in foreign tongues, because it was his business to write German, and he thought that, by reading other languages, he should lose his nicer perceptions of what belonged to his own. Thomas Moore, who was a fine classical scholar, tells us that the perfect purity with which the Greeks wrote their own language was justly attributed to their entire

abstinence from any other. It is notorious that Burke, after he took to reading the pamphlets of the French terrorists, never wrote so pure English as he did before. Gibbon, who boasted that his *Essai sur l'Étude de la Litérature* was taken by the Parisians for the production of one of their own countrymen, paid for the idiomatic purity of his French by the Gallicisms that deform the "Decline and Fall."

Our young men might be pardoned for making some sacrifices to acquire a knowledge of the modern languages, if such a knowledge were necessary as a key to their literatures; but it is not. Nearly all the masterpieces have been translated into English. We are aware of the objections to translations; they are, at best, as Cervantes said, but "the reverse side of tapestry." The scholar has yet to be born who can reproduce in their full splendor in another tongue the epithets of St. Paul, the silvery lights of Livy, the *curiosa felicitas* of Horace, or the picture-words of Æschylus. But how many of our young men and women, who cannot give themselves a liberal education, are likely to enjoy the originals better than the translations that are executed by accomplished linguists? Not one in fifty. If a man of so exquisite a taste as Mr. Emerson prefers, as he tells us, to read foreign works in translations, is it at all likely that "Young America," with his almost utter ignorance of the niceties and delicacies of the modern languages, will lose much by imitating his example? We say, then, in conclusion, if you are a man of leisure, or have sufficient time and money for a liberal education, by all means study French and German, and, if you can, Spanish and Italian; but, if you are to begin life at eighteen or twenty, let Spiers and Adler alone.

Your first duty is to acquaint yourself with the learning and literature of your own and the mother country. Our English granaries will, of themselves, feed a long life. When you have mastered the giants who wrote in your mother-tongue,— when the great works of Chaucer, Shakspeare, Hooker, Bacon, Milton, Swift, Wordsworth, Byron, Mill, Tennyson, and all our other representative authors, have passed like the iron atoms of the blood into your mental constitution, it will be time to go abroad after "fresh fields and pastures new." But do not, we beg of you, indulge the foolish ambition of becoming a polyglot when you cannot write a grammatical letter in your mother-tongue, and have never read a page in half of its best writers.

WORKING BY RULE.

A BOSTON correspondent of the New York "Tribune," in speaking of the late Professor Agassiz, remarks that he was singularly unmethodical in his habits. Men who live and work by rule would be puzzled to understand how the great scientist contrived to do so much without these helps. Agassiz lived and worked by inspiration. "If he was suddenly seized with an interest in some scientific inquiry, he would pursue it at once,—putting by, perhaps, other work in which he had just got fairly started. 'I always like to take advantage of my productive moods,' he said to me. Thus he often had several irons in the fire, only one of which might be ultimately finished. Probably he saw that the last iron promised to work up better than the first. He never could be made to work like a machine, turning out a definite quantity at regular intervals. He never felt bound to regard the rule that you must finish one thing before you begin another, so emphatically presented in the old copy-books."

The fact here stated concerning the habits of Agassiz, points to an important principle of intellectual labor which merits the attention of all mental workers. There are some persons who seem to think the great end and aim of life is to practice the minor virtues. To be courteous, punctual, economical in the management of time and money,—to do one thing at a time, and never to pro-

crastinate,— in short, moral dexterity and handiness,— are qualities which they never tire of glorifying, and which, above all others, they aim to exemplify in their own lives and characters. Almost every liberally-educated man can remember some persons of this class whom he knew in college,— young men who were marked by their associates for their enslavement to certain stiff, cast-iron rules, more inflexible than the laws of the Medes and Persians, so often referred to by stump-speakers,—by which they regulated their minutest actions. Over their mantels were posted a long string of regulations, which, at a heroic sacrifice of comfort, they daily and sedulously observed,— such as these: "Remember to: 1. Rise at 6. 2. Recitation at 7. 3. Breakfast at 8. 4. Exercise half an hour. 5. Study two hours;" and so on. If they had an hour or a half-hour for general reading, they would read to the end of it with the most exemplary conscientiousness, however stupid they felt, or however persistently their wits went wool-gathering; and, on the other hand, they would shut the book exactly on the instant when the minute-hand got opposite the dot, however deeply the passage might chance to interest them. Such martyrs to method are generally very conscientious men, who honestly wish to make the most of their faculties and opportunities; but generally, we fear that they are not overstocked with brains, and, as they do not create a prodigious sensation in college, so they are rarely guilty of setting any rivers on fire after graduation. It was good people of this kind that Sir Walter Scott had in his mind's eye when he said he had never known a man of genius who could be perfectly regular in his habits, whilst he had known many blockheads who

could. The Roman poet, Juvenal, with his usual vigorous touch, has painted a "representative man" of this class:

> "If he but walk a mile, he first must look
> For the fit hour and minute in his book;
> If his eye itch, the pain will still endure,
> Nor, till a scheme be raised, apply the cure."

Now, it is well to have some method in one's actions, — even in one's madness, as did Hamlet; but to be shackled by many and minute rules of conduct,— to rule all one's actions with a ruler,— to divide one's time with a pair of compasses, and allow precisely so much to this thing and so much to that,— is an intolerable torment. The virtues that accompany method,— such as punctuality, the disposition not to loiter, and the power of working up spare moments for useful purposes,— are all commendable; they help a man to do his work triumphantly, and in an easy, assured manner; but it is possible to overrate their value. They oil the wheels of life, and make them run without hitch or creaking; but they do not determine the character of that life. Their only value is derivative, and they have no more power to do the business of life than a pulley has to lift a weight. Robert Hall used to say of early rising, that the real question was not what time you get up, but what do you do when you are up. So method and the improvement of time are important in themselves; but a far more important question is, *how* do you improve your time? It is well to be at your post at the very moment the clock strikes the hour; but it is far more important to be able to discharge its duties after you have got there. Mental stature, intellectual power, has not a very close relation, we fear, to the virtues of a martinet. A

wise, thoughtful, useful man,— a clear-headed reasoner, a profound thinker,— may be immethodical, dilatory, slovenly, just as a giant may be clumsy, awkward, and loose in all his make-up.

Perhaps no two persons were ever more unlike each other, in respect to method or system, than Southey and Coleridge. They strikingly illustrate the advantages and drawbacks of the habit of mind which has been so much lauded. Southey was as regular as a clock. Always prompt and punctual, he did his work with the exactness and precision of a machine; and the watch no sooner ticked the hour than his literary tale of brick was forthcoming. He wrote poetry before breakfast; he read during breakfast; he read history till dinner; he corrected proof-sheets between dinner and tea; he wrote an essay for the "Quarterly" afterwards; and after supper composed "The Doctor," an elaborate jest. Never was there a greater miser of time; never, since Pliny, were moments so conscientiously improved. Even when walking for exercise, he took a book with him. But what does his life prove, except that the habits of mind best fitted for *communicating* information,— habits formed with the greatest care, and daily regulated by the best motives,— are exactly the habits which are likely to afford a man the least information to communicate? Southey's works are prodigies of learning and labor; but who reads them now? What work has he produced which the world "will not willingly let die"; what bold, striking thoughts has he uttered which stick in the memory like barbed arrows, that cannot be withdrawn? Of the hundred and three volumes, which, in addition to the one hundred and fifty review-articles, he so painfully composed, not one, in all proba-

bility, except possibly the "Life of Nelson," of which his publisher dictated the subject and size, will be read fifty years hence. The truth is, Southey read and wrote so systematically and so mechanically,—so much like a machine,—that his life was monotonous and humdrum; it had no adventures, changes, events, or experiences; and hence his works show a painful want of intellectual bone and muscle, and rarely touch the hearts or thrill the sympathies of his hearers. Gorgeous passages may be found in them,—proofs of vigorous fancy and imagination; but his persons and their adventures are so supernatural—so dreamy, phantom-like, and out of the circle of human sympathies, both in their triumphs and sufferings,—that his elaborate and ambitious poems produce on us the impression of a splendid but unsubstantial nightmare.

Now look at Coleridge. He passed his whole life out at elbows, physically and morally. He loitered and dawdled; he wasted whole weeks and months; he had no sense of the value of minutes; he prosecuted a thousand literary schemes which were never finished; and, when he died, left behind him, as Lamb playfully said, "forty thousand treatises on metaphysics and divinity, not one of them complete." It is in these fragments,—in casual remarks, scribbled often on the margins of books, and reminding us of the Sibyl's leaves,—in imperfectly-reported conversations, and in a few brief but exquisitely-harmonized poems, that we must look for the proof of Coleridge's mighty but imperfectly-recorded powers. Yet who that is familiar with these, and with the writings of Southey, can doubt that Coleridge was by far the greater man of the two; and who can help suspecting that there was, if not a direct connection, at

least a strong sympathy between his genius and his slovenliness? He had, as another has said, a gift for seeing the difficulties of life, its seamy side, its incongruities and contradictions, which he would probably have lost if he had been more respectable and victorious.

"But Agassiz's or Coleridge's method of working would be ruinous to any man who had not their wonderful faculties, their far-sight and insight." No doubt; and therefore neither of them ever proposed his own method of working as a model for others. "Once, in my presence," says the correspondent of the "Tribune," "a near relative ventured to ask him (Agassiz) if he did not think he would accomplish more if he finished one thing before he began another. 'Every man must work according to his own method,' he replied. It was frequently a hard thing to get him to sign a paper, or write a letter (except for somebody else), or to look over accounts, or to do little routine work. Yet he could never have attained his great eminence in science if he had not paid, in his department, great attention to the minutest and apparently the most insignificant details. Looking at the drawing of a fish made by his artist, he said, after taking a single glance, 'It is a beautiful drawing, but don't you see you have left out two or three of the scales?'"

The sum of the matter is, method, like fire, is a good slave, but a bad master, and is too apt to degenerate, like other minor virtues, into mere priggishness. As intellectual companions, your systematic, square-rule-and-compass men are, of all persons, the dullest and most unsatisfying. "I do not like," says the charming French writer, Xavier De Maistre, in his "Voyage autour de ma Chambre," "people who are so completely the masters of their steps and

their ideas that they say to themselves, 'To-day I will make three visits; I will write four letters; I will finish that work which I have begun.'" We sympathize with him. We respect the literary Pharisees, who tithe mental mint, anise, and cummin, with scrupulous regularity; but we cannot love them. Even in morals, it is not the most straight-laced persons,—the "unco guid," who never deviate by a hair's breadth from the path of propriety,—that are the best Christians, the best neighbors and citizens, parents or children, husbands or wives. John Milton has justly denounced those scrupulists "who, when God has set us in a fair allowance of way, never leave subtleizing and casuisting till they have straightened and pared that liberal path into *a razor's edge to walk on.*" And the wise old Gascon, Montaigne, with his usual sagacity, observes of systems of conduct generally, that a young man ought sometimes "*to cross his own rules*," to awake his vigor, and to keep it from growing faint and rusty; "for there is no course of life so weak as that which is carried on by rule and discipline." The reader of Dickens will remember the old clock at Dr. Blimber's, whose monotonous beat rapped every second on the head as soon as it was born, killing it stone-dead on the spot. Like this, we fear, is the murderous clock-work of many human lives.

TOO MUCH SPEAKING.

DO we need more public speakers in this country? We ask the question because we often see paragraphs going the rounds of the press, advising fathers to teach their boys to "spout" as a means of getting on in the world, considering the countless occasions on which, in this country, a man is called to address his fellows. Moreover, we are reminded that the speaking class *par eminence*,— that is, the lawyers,— usually number nine-tenths of the United States Congress.

There is force in these suggestions; yet we are fully of the opinion that the advice is mischievous; that, instead of swelling the number of public speakers in this country, it would be a mercy to the community, and should be the solicitude of every one having the control of boys, to diminish it. This running at the mouth has become a terrible epidemic, and we believe that the health of the body politic demands that it should be checked rather than encouraged. The facility for extempore speaking which dazzles so many persons, begets self-conceit and a thirst for public notice, and tempts thousands of our young men to seek temporary notoriety at the expense of a solid and enduring reputation. Instead of cultivating and disciplining their brains, storing their minds with the hived wisdom of the ages, and, above all, acquiring that most valuable and important of all arts, the art of thinking consecutively and with effect, they study clap-trap and sensational

oratory,—the art of producing instantaneous and ephemeral, instead of deep and lasting effects. Habits of speaking thus formed speedily react on the habits of thinking, and instead of weighing questions carefully and trying to ascertain their merits, young men view them only as pegs upon which to hang speeches. An easy utterance, a lively verbosity, a knack of stinging invective, and a command of that piquant ridicule which always brings down the house, soon come to be preferred to the profoundest knowledge, the largest grasp of mind, and the most thorough comprehension of a subject, which, owing to the very *embarras des richesses*, hems and stammers in trying to wreak itself upon expression.

There is hardly any gift so dangerous or so worthless as what is vulgarly termed eloquence. The French have rightly characterized it as the *flux de bouche*,—a mental diarrhœa. It is a mistake to suppose that it is difficult to acquire the faculty of fluent speaking; almost any man can succeed who will try often, and who can harden himself against the mortification of frequent failures. Complete self-possession and a ready flow of language may thus be acquired mechanically; but it will be the self-possession of ignorance, and the fluency of comparative emptiness. Such a habit may teach him something of arrangement, and a few of the simplest methods of making an impression; but, as Lord Brougham has said, "his diction is sure to be much worse than if he never made the attempt. Such a speaker is never in want of a word, and hardly ever has one that is worth having." The truth is, full men are seldom fluent. Washington seldom spoke in public, and when he did, it was in a few pointed sentences, delivered in an easy, conversational way. In the conven-

tion that framed the Constitution of the United States he made but two speeches, of a few words each; yet the convention acknowledged the master spirit, and it is said that but for the thirty words of his first speech, the Constitution would have been rejected by the people. Neither Franklin nor Jefferson had "the gift of gab," though the one wrote the Declaration of Independence, and the other "snatched the lightning from the skies and the sceptre from tyrants." Though silent and slow-tongued, each in the weightiest debate was effective, because he spoke tersely and from a full mind, and drove a nail home with every blow. The latter changed the messages of the Executive to Congress from oral to written discourses, because of his aversion to public speaking. President Jackson was as tongue-tied as Grant. Napoleon said that his greatest difficulty in ruling was in finding men of deeds rather than of words. When asked how he maintained his influence over his superiors in age and experience when he commanded in Italy, he said, "By reserve." Moltke is said to be silent in eight languages. He rarely speaks, except in the crash of solid shot and the shriek of the angry shell. When the Creator was to choose a man for the greatest work ever done in this world, it was Moses, the man "slow of speech," and not Aaron, the man who could "speak well," that He commissioned. It was said of Col. John Allen, a Kentucky jurist, that he *knew* more than he could *say;* and of the noted Isham Talbot, whose tongue ran like a flutter-mill, that he *said* more than he *knew.*

The most convincing speakers have been niggard of their words. The reason why the classic orators of antiquity spoke with such terseness and condensed energy, is that they turned over their subjects long and deeply,

and made the pen a constant auxiliary of the tongue. By this double means — the *cogitatio et commentatio*, as Cicero calls it, added to the *assidua ac diligens scriptura*,— they laid up in the arsenal of the memory a supply of weapons for any emergency that might arise; and the sentences thus turned over and over in the laboratory of thought, and submitted to criticism and revision by being embodied in written composition, were immeasurably more weighty and effective than those which in our day are thrown off in the hurry of debate, when there is no time to pause for the best thoughts and the most pregnant and pointed expression.

It is said that the Germans, long-winded as they are in their books, and though they will endure any amount of printed matter, unappalled by size of volume, number of pages, or closeness of type, will not tolerate a long speech out of a lecture-room. A ten-minutes' harangue is an exception; one of an hour's length is a phenomenon; one of two hours never dreamed of; and as for the feat of speaking four or five hours consecutively, which has been achieved by some leathern-lunged American politicians, it is looked upon as an impossibility, or, if credited on evidence too positive to doubt, is ranked with rope-dancing, balancing one's self heels upward on the point of a steeple, or similar eccentric and useless performances to which men sometimes pervert their powers.

The weightiest men in the British Parliament have ever been slow of speech. For a speaker who has something to say, John Bull has an exhaustless patience; but for mere loquacity he has an unmitigated contempt. Hemming and hawing,— stammering,— want of tact,— poverty of diction, —all are borne with patience, so long as the hearers

believe that the speaker has some special knowledge, some telling fact, some wise suggestion, which he will contrive to get out, if he is suffered to take his own time and way. But the instant a suspicion arises that he is talking "for buncombe,"—that he is trying to dazzle his hearers with oratorical pyrotechnics,—that he is, in short, *vox et preterea nihil*,—they give reins to their indignation, and cough him down without mercy. So far is this carried, that a traveler tells us that, in the House of Commons, it is almost unparliamentary to be fluent,—to speak right on, without hemming and hawing; and quite unlordly, because smelling of a professional aptitude, to march through a long sentence without losing the way,—without stumbling over Lindley Murray and possibly the Queen herself,—and without the speaker coming out of the sentence at last nearly where he went in. The most skilful debaters in that body, instead of spinning out their words like a juggler blowing endless ribbons from his mouth, cultivate a prudent reticence. Like Anthony, they are plain, blunt men. They shrink from antithesis, and epigram, and point, and regard fluency as a debater's most dangerous snare. Nor is this opinion ill-grounded. Its truth was strikingly illustrated a few years ago by the comparative success of that brilliant parliamentary orator, Mr. Horsman, and Lord Palmerston. It was remarked that the very brilliancy of Mr. Horsman converted his hearers into hostile critics, piquing themselves upon their skill in seeing through the magic colors in which his genius shrouded the truth; whereas Lord Palmerston's dexterous hemming and hawing only made his audience sympathetically anxious to help the struggle of the honest advocate of a sound cause against the disadvantages of his own oratorical defects.

If an Englishman would succeed as a speaker, he first seeks to store his mind with *facts*, and, before studying oratorical tricks and arts, he tries by patient study and profound meditation to master the subjects upon which there is a demand for knowledge. Not till he has honestly worked out a problem by brooding over it like a hen over her eggs, does he prepare to lay the solution of it before the public. What is the secret of Mr. Bright's oratorical power? Practice in debating clubs? No; but the habits of keen observation and reflection fostered by his public and private life,—the constant claims on ease and readiness caused by a political canvass, the demand on the resources of practical comment and sagacious observation made at the hustings or in the House of Commons. It is because he has *brooded for years in solitude* over the subjects on which he has delivered himself with so much fire, that his mind has acquired that depth of passion, earnestness, and force which the playful and facile contests of the college debating society would only have diluted and diminished. In short, oratory is the weapon of an athlete, and it can never be wielded to any purpose by a mere stripling. The heroes of collegiate discussions gain intellectual agility, readiness, facility; but this suppleness of mind is too often gained at the expense of higher and more sterling qualities, and especially of that unity of personal character which is one of the great sources of impressiveness. It takes serious business and real purpose to train the orator; and if the aspirant begins his career too early, the strain is too great for the system that is to support it,—the tax eats into the capital,—the practice, in Shakespeare's words,

> "Lays on such burdens as to bear them
> The back is sacrifice to the load."

College life and college debating-clubs, it has been truly said, give brightness, alertness, wit, candor, fairness, grace, to the intellects which they discipline; but they do not give, they rather take away, that effect of intensity and massiveness, that subduing and overpowering impressiveness which come of brooding thought and purpose,— which come, that is, of the tone of mind which has *not* accustomed itself to look at questions with other men's eyes. It is because he cares less for manner than for matter,— less to be quick and fluent than to be strong and full,— because he thinks long and deeply on the subject which he speaks upon,— that the English orator is weightier and more impressive than the American. The English care most for the foundation of their speeches; we, for the superstructure. We fight splendidly in debate, but it is to win or perish, and we exhaust ourselves by a single effort. They have less dash and brilliancy, but great reserved force, and renew the attack to-morrow with as much vigor as at the first onset. It has been justly said that "if the maiden speeches of some of England's most brilliant and polished debaters have been downright failures, it has been owing to inexperience, not to the lack of solid information,— to want of practice in the tricks and mechanical devices of oratory, and in no degree to the absence of convictions or sound thought."

But, says some one, is it then of no importance to cultivate the faculty of speech? Do not men of fine abilities sacrifice half their power and influence by not learning the art of speaking well in public? Is it not painful to see a man who has spent years in self-culture, standing dumb as a heathen oracle, or with his intellect

smitten with indescribable confusion, the moment he opens his lips in public, for lack of a few happy sentences in which to embody his thoughts? Yes; but it is not necessary to join a debating club, or to thrust one's self forward as a speaker in all assemblies, in order to become a good public speaker. Every time one opens his lips in society, he has an opportunity to acquire and strengthen the habit of giving clear and forcible utterance to his thoughts. Instead, then, of bidding our young men "spout," we would bid them read widely, think deeply, reason logically, and act sensibly. We would with Richter exhort them never to speak on a subject till they have read themselves full upon it, and never to read upon a subject till they have thought themselves hungry upon it. When a sensible and thoughtful man has anything to say, he will always find a way of saying it, when circumstances require him to speak. On the other hand, if a young man begins spouting on all occasions, while his faculties are yet immature, and his knowledge scanty, crude, and ill-arranged, he will be almost sure to retain through life a fatal facility for pouring forth ill-digested thoughts in polished periods, and a hatred for cautious reflection. We have rarely known a fluent speaker who said things that stuck like burrs in the memory; but we have heard hesitating and artless talkers who have blurted out the most original, the deepest and the most pregnant things which we have cared to remember. No,— we want no more spouting. We want thought, and taste, and brevity, and that Doric simplicity of style which is so nearly allied to the highest and most effective eloquence.

A FORGOTTEN WIT.

WHAT is more uncertain than literary fame? The history of literature shows that, if it is one of the most enviable of human possessions, it is at the same time one of the most fleeting. There is scarcely anything about which one can prophesy with so little certainty as concerning the future fame of an author who is now the pet or favorite of the reading world. Fifty years ago Byron was the poetic idol of the public; and Macaulay did not exaggerate when he said that all the readers of verse in England,—nay, in Europe,—hastened to sit at his feet. Now, instead of having his thousands of worshipers, who drink gin ceaselessly, and strive, in turned-down collars, to look Conrad-like and misanthropic, he is barely a power in literature. Who reads Crabbe now, or Southey, or Moore? Yet Crabbe, the "Pope in worsted stockings," was so famous in his day as to create a decided sensation at the hotel where he stayed on visiting London; Southey, who, as a poet, is remembered to-day only by a few pieces and passages which he himself pronounced clap-trap, believed that his ponderous epics would be immortal; and Moore, whose songs were sung in a thousand drawing-rooms, might well have believed that they, at least, would not be *ephemeridae*. Again, what reader of to-day has toiled through the seven volumes of Richardson's "Pamela"; or how many have ever heard the name of "Clarissa" and "Sir Charles Grandison"? Yet these

were the novels which held our great-grandmothers spell-bound,— which were more popular than are the tales of Dickens or Miss Evans now. Rousseau hung over Richardson's pages with rapture; and Diderot declared that, if forced to sell his books, he would never part with these, which he ranked with the productions of Moses, Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles. Who reads Cleveland now, or "the great Churchill," or Hayley, or Dr. Darwin, or Beattie's prose or poetry, or "Fitzosborne's Letters," which reached its eightieth edition, or Blair's Sermons, which sold in their day like Robertson's Sermons and "Ecce Homo" in ours? These, and a thousand other cases that might be cited, show that the highest contemporary fame is no guarantee of immortality. The suddenness with which an author who has been puffed into the loftiest elevation is sometimes hurled into the gulf of forgetfulness reminds one of the vicissitudes that befell Milton's Satan in his flight through chaos:

> "His sail-broad vans
> He spreads for flight, and, in the surging smoke
> Uplifted, spurns the ground; thence, many a league,
> As in a cloudy chair, ascending, rides
> Audacious. . . . .
> . . . . All unawares,
> Fluttering his pennons vain, plumb down he drops
> Ten thousand fathoms deep."

These reflections have been provoked by a perusal of the writings of Chamfort, of which a new edition was published a few years ago in Paris. Though a leading journalist in the French Revolution, he is now almost forgotten in Europe, while few persons in America have even heard of his name. Sebastian Roch Nicholas Chamfort was born in 1741, near Clermont, in Auvergne. He was a natural

son, and had the quickness of parts which the proverb ascribes to such children. He never knew who his father was. His mother, who was a *dame de compagnie*, came to Paris to hide her shame, and there found friends and protectors, through whose influence he found a boursier's place at the College of the Grassins. Rather a dull scholar at first, he at last shone forth brilliantly, and in his third year this *filius nullius*, this "child of misery, baptized in tears," carried off the five grand prizes of the University. These triumphs determined his calling; he chose letters. At first he tried to get employment from the journals and booksellers, but failed, and would have starved had not a young Abbé paid him a louis a week for writing sermons. He next became a tutor; then secretary to a rich citizen of Liege, whom he followed across the Rhine; but they soon quarreled, and Chamfort returned to Paris, saying that "the thing in the world for which he was least fitted was to be a German." An indifferent comedy, which had some success, and the winning of a prize at the Academy, and another at the Academy of Marseilles for an *Éloge* on La Fontaine, introduced him into society, where his good looks, his *aplomb*, and his ready and brilliant wit, soon made him a favorite. Men and women of rank now sought him and doated on him. That they did not for a moment suspect the intensity of pride and the rage for equality which slumbered in his heart, is not strange; for far keener observers were deceived than the great ladies who thus caressed him. When he was elected an Academician, Rivarol said that he was "like a bit of lily-of-the-valley in a bouquet of poppies." The lily-of-the-valley exhaled strange and deadly poisons with its perfume.

Gradually the gay and dissipated life which Chamfort led told upon his health. He went from watering-place to watering-place, among others to Spa and Barèges, but with little benefit. He lost the vigor and good looks which led the Princess of Craon to say of him, "He looks only an Adonis, but he is a Hercules"; but his position was assured. Places and pensions were showered upon him. At Barèges, four ladies fell in love with him, among them Madame de Grammont and Madame de Choiseul,—"in reality," wrote Mdlle. Lespinasse to a friend, "four friends, who each of them loved him with all the strength of four," and she adds, "he is very well pleased, and tries his best to be modest." About this time he wrote his tragedy of "Mustapha et Zéanger," a play which has been much praised for its purity of style and *sweetness of sentiment*,—which Sainte-Beuve notes as somewhat singular in a tragedy, and in an author like Chamfort; "he reserved," adds the critic, "all his sweetness for his tragedies. He shows himself a feeble disciple of Racine in his *Bajazet*, and of Voltaire in *Zaïre*." Marie Antoinette, flattered by some allusions to herself in one of his tragedies, gave him a pension of one thousand two hundred livres. The Prince of Condé also offered him the post of *Secrétaire des Commandements*. In spite of these successes, however, envy, malice, and uncharitableness continued to gnaw at his heart. His acrid sayings about those with whom he lived burn, it has been well said, the very paper on which they are written. His reply to Rulhière, itself stinging enough, is among the mildest of them. "I have committed," said the wit and historian, "but one wickedness in my life." "When will it end?" asked Chamfort. Resigning his secretaryship in a fit of

spleen and misanthropy, he retired to Auteuil, saying, "It is not with the living, but with the dead, one should commune," meaning, of course, with books. His communion had hardly begun, before, at the dangerous age of forty, he fell in love with the Duchess of Maine, a beauty who counted eight-and-forty winters. They married and lived together but a few months, when she died, and her husband relapsed into a profound melancholy. The secret of his unhappiness at this time was his inaction and his sterility. Nothing, as Sainte-Beuve truly observes, is so consoling to the man of letters as to produce; nothing better reconciles him with others and with himself. The excessive pleasures in which Chamfort had indulged, had rapidly destroyed his health and his youth. "I have destroyed my passions," he said, "pretty much as a violent man kills his horse, not being able to govern him." Made an Academician, he delivered on the occasion a brilliant discourse, and immediately after published a "Discourse against Academies." Occasionally he went to Court, where the Queen, Marie Antoinette, once said to him: "Do you know, M. de Chamfort, that you pleased all the world at Versailles, not by your wit, but in spite of it?" "The reason is easy to find," replied the sparkling satirist; "at Versailles I learn with resignation many things I know from people who are completely ignorant of them."

When the Revolution burst forth, Chamfort's friendship was sought by Mirabeau. The influence he soon had with the great Tribune is the highest proof of his sagacity and power. In his letters to Chamfort, Mirabeau recognizes him as not only his dearest and most sympathetic, but as his most suggestive and inspiring friend. "I cannot deny myself the pleasure," said Mirabeau to him, "of rubbing

the most electric head I have ever known. There is hardly a day I do not find myself saying, '*Chamfort froncerait le sourcil; ne faisons pas, n'écrivons pas cela*'; or, on the other hand, '*Chamfort sera content.*'" In the union of the two men there was just that blending of opposite qualities which is essential to the strongest friendship. Delicacy, neatness, subtlety, finesse, characterized the one; force, impetuosity, fury, sensibility, predominated in the other,—each supplementing the other's defects. Throwing himself into the revolutionary struggles, Chamfort defended the new doctrine with heart, mind, tongue, and pen; and, in the enthusiasm of the hour, though his whole fortune was in pensions, vindicated the decree that suppressed them. For a time he was one of the most active and powerful revolutionary journalists; but, at last, as the Reign of Terror grew darker, he was shocked and disgusted by its atrocities, and began to denounce the reigning furies in vehement terms. Indignant at the mockery of the words "Fraternity" and "Liberty" traced on all the walls, he translated them thus: "Be my brother, or I kill thee." He used to liken the fraternity of the revolutionary cut-throats to that of Cain and Abel. Finally he was denounced by an employé in the National Library, of which he had been made one of the Librarians by Roland, and was hurried to prison. Soon after he was released; but, finding himself "shadowed" by a gendarme, he mentally swore that he would die rather than go back to the dungeon. Being seized again by the myrmidons of power, he tried first to shoot, then to stab himself, but only succeeded in inflicting ugly wounds. "You see what it is to be maladroit in the use of one's hands," he exclaimed; "one cannot even kill one's self to escape the pangs of tyranny."

In spite of a ball in his head, the loss of one eye, and other mutilations, he recovered, but only to live for a brief time, dying on the 13th of April, 1793, in the fifty-second year of his age. It was still the Reign of Terror, and but three friends dared to follow him to the tomb. It was his opinion to the last, that the pistol-ball, with which he had attempted to blow out his brains, was still in his head. "*Je sens*," said he, "*que la balle est resté dans ma tête; ils n'iront pas l'y chercher.*"

Chateaubriand, describing the personal appearance of Chamfort, says that "he was pale-faced and of a delicate complexion. His blue eye, occasionally cold and veiled when unexcited, sparkled and flashed with fire when he became animated. His slightly open nostrils gave to his countenance an expression of energetic sensibility. His voice was flexible, and its modulations followed the movements of his soul; but in the last days of my sojourn at Paris, it had acquired some asperity, and one detected in it the agitated and imperious accent of the factions."

The best edition of Chamfort for the English reader is that edited by Arséne Houssaye, which contains his choicest pieces, omitting all of temporary interest. Few books contain a greater amount of sparkling wit, delicate satire, and worldly wisdom, than is condensed in this small volume. Mingling much with the world, Chamfort brought into it a spirit of observation so ingenious and penetrating that the shrewdest and most sagacious of his contemporaries deemed him almost unerring and miraculous in his judgments. Many sayings which are now on everybody's lips first fell from his lips or pen. It was he who first divided our friends into "those who love us, those who are indifferent to us, and those who hate us."

It was he, not Talleyrand, who said, "Revolutions are not made with rose-water." It was he who gave to the French armies, as they marched into Belgium, the motto, "War to the castle; peace to the cottage." It was Chamfort, too, that furnished the Abbé-Siéyes with the memorable closing words of his pamphlet: "What is the Third Estate? All. What has it? Nothing." Chamfort was accustomed to write out daily, on little bits of paper, the results of his observations and reflections condensed into maxims; and these *mots*, carefully polished and sharpened, with the anecdotes he had picked up in the great world among professional men, artists, and men of letters, form the most brilliant and attractive part of his writings. The following, selected almost at random, are fair specimens of the whole:

"The public, the public, how many fools does it take to make a public?"

"The menace of a neglected cold is for the doctors that which purgatory is for the priests,—a mine of wealth."

"'You yawn,' said a lady to her husband. 'My dear friend,' said the husband, 'husband and wife are but one, and when I am alone I become weary.'"

"To despise money is to dethrone a king; *il y a du ragoût.*"

"The majority of nobles recall their ancestors pretty much as an Italian *cicerone* recalls Cicero."

"Madame de Tencin, with the suavest manners in the world, was an unprincipled woman, capable of anything. On one occasion, a friend was praising her gentleness. 'Aye, aye,' said the Abbé Imblet, 'if she had any object whatever in poisoning you, undoubtedly she would choose the sweetest and least disagreeable poison in the world.'"

"I heard one day a devotee, speaking against people who discuss articles of faith, say *naivement:* 'Gentlemen, a true Christian never examines what he is ordered to believe. It is with that as with a bitter pill; if you chew it, you will never be able to swallow it.'"

"The most utterly lost of all days is that on which you have not once laughed."

"Society is composed of two great classes,— those who have more dinners than appetites, and those who have more appetites than dinners."

"Madame de Talmont, seeing M. de Richelieu, instead of lavishing attention on herself, paying court to Madame Brionne, a very pretty woman without the least mind, said to him, 'Marshal, you are not blind, but I believe you are a little deaf.'"

"A lady, who shall be nameless, was at the representation of 'Mérope, and did not shed a tear. Everybody was surprised; perceiving which the lady said, 'I could indeed have wept, but I am engaged out to-night to supper.'"

"L'Éclure used to relate, that, when quite a young man, and without a fortune, arriving at Lunéville, he obtained the place of dentist to King Stanislaus on the very day on which the king lost his last tooth."

"A lady aged ninety said to Fontenelle, at ninety-five: 'Death has forgotten us.' 'Silence! not a word!' said Fontenelle, placing his finger upon his mouth."

"A person chided M." (Chamfort himself) "upon his taste for solitude. He replied: 'It is because I am more accustomed to my own faults than to those of another person.'"

"Man arrives a novice at every age of life."

"Nature, in loading us with so much misery, and in giving us an invincible attachment to life, seems to have dealt with man like an incendiary who sets our house on fire after having posted sentinels at our door. The danger must be very great to oblige us to leap out of the window."

"M. de Lassay, a very pleasant man, but who had a great knowledge of society, said that it would be necessary to swallow a *toad* every morning, in order not to find anything disgusting the rest of the day, when one has to spend it in the world."

"A certain person, who shall be nameless, had been, for thirty years, in the habit of passing his evenings at Madame H's. At length his wife died. People thought he would marry the lady whose house he frequented, and his best friends encouraged him to perpetrate the deed. He refused, saying, "In that case, my friends, where should I find a house of refuge to pass my evenings?"

"People give ten-guinea dinners to entertain those for whose good digestion of the expensive dinner they would not give a groat."

"France is a country in which it is always necessary to display one's vices, and always dangerous to disclose one's virtues."

These sayings, so acrid and corrosive, are a fair specimen of what a witty French writer has called *les tenailles mordantes de Chamfort*. The majority of those relating to society apply only to the great world in which he lived, the society of the great; they wholly fail to characterize the less factitious society in which the natural

sentiments are not abolished. It was because he lived too long in high life, that theatre of unequal struggles, of trickery, and of vanity,— because he passed too many years in refined society, and saw its hollowness, selfishness and dissimulation,— that he has given us so many pictures of hypocrisy and insincerity, and was able to utter his famous saying: "I have been led there by degrees. In living and in seeing men, the heart *must break or be bronzed* (*se brise ou se bronze*). Chamfort had one of those unfortunate natures, which, ignorant of the happy alchemy which converts even gall and wormwood into honey, find bitterness in everything, and echo the sentiment of the poet,—

"La rose a des poisons qu'on finit par trouver."

He confesses, however, to have had in his life two years of happiness, and six months of perfect felicity. He had retired to the country with a female friend older than himself, but with whom he felt himself in perfect sympathy of sentiment and of thought. He lost her, and appears to have buried with her the remains of his heart. He never speaks of her but in terms that mark a profound sadness:

"When my heart has need of tenderness, I recall the friends whom I have lost, women of whom death has robbed me. I inhabit their grave; I send my soul to wander about theirs. Alas! I have three tombs."

In estimating many of his maxims we must not forget that they come from a man who never had a family, who was not softened by its endearments, *ni en remontant ni en descendant*, who had no father, and who, in his turn, never wished to be one. "Consulting reason only," he again and again asks, "what man would wish to be a father?" "I will not marry," he says again, "for fear

of having a son to resemble me. Yes, for fear of having a son who, being poor like myself, may know not how to lie, or to flatter, or to creep, and may have to undergo the same trials as myself."

Chamfort did nothing continuously; he has left no book as a monument of his powers. He left others to execute important enterprises, and was content to supply the stimulus. His forte, his genius, lay in summing up a situation, a counsel, a general impression, in a single word. His influence upon French society was unquestionable, but it was exercised wholly in conversation, in sallies of wit, in those sparkling sayings "which make one (a thing so rare) laugh and think at the same time." It is in the *Maximes et Pensées*, which form the latter half of Houssaye's edition of his remains, that we must look for the quintessence of this piquant and *spirituel* writer. Whether he deserves a literary resurrection, the reader can judge. That his genius was quite as original and brilliant as that of many an author whom the world does "not willingly let die," we think is clear. That he was especially a keen observer of men, the volume we have quoted from abundantly proves. The court, the camp, the city, the exchange, the theatres, the churches,—all the classes, ranks, and conditions of society,—pass in review in his pictured pages, and reveal themselves to us "in their habit as they lived."

Will it be said that he was cynical,—that his wit was dry, caustic, and sardonic? So was Swift's and Rochefoucauld's. Are there occasional passages in his writings that one would not like to read aloud? Yes; but are there not more such in Shakspeare, Sterne, Pope, and Montaigne? That Chamfort would have produced

works more worthy of his genius if his energies had not been drained by the exhausting labors of journalism, we cannot doubt. We all know the effects of these labors, when ceaseless and engrossing, upon even the most lavishly-endowed writer. He becomes at last a hack thinker and a loose writer; he is a race-horse in the shafts of an omnibus. Aaron's beard never would have come down to us in history, had he been in the habit of shaving daily; and had Montaigne and Pascal lived in our day, the immortal "Essays" might have dwindled into a *Moniteur* correspondence, and the "Provincial Letters" might have been let off in squibs to fizz and sparkle through fifty-two weeks in *Charivari*. Granting all that can be said in disparagement of Chamfort,—that he was sour and misanthropical; that his genius had little flow; that his wit was disproportionate to his other gifts; that he lacked that highest wisdom which only goodness can give, and was blunt and vehement where a milder and more courteous expression of his opinions would have better insured their reception,—we still think his works should be kept from the "moth and worm, and mouldering hand of time." We believe with Sainte-Beuve, that, in spite of his faults, Chamfort will continue to be classed in the front rank of those who have managed *la saillie française* with the most dexterity and boldness. Too sickly and too irritable to deserve ever to obtain a place in the series of true moralists, his name will remain attached to a number of concise, sharp, vibrating, and picturesque sayings, which pique the attention, and which fix themselves like barbed arrows in the memory. At the same time, however, we would say to all his readers, in the words of the same critic: "Méfiez-vous, pourtant! je crains qu'il n'y ait toujours un peu d'arsenic au fond."

ARE WE ANGLO-SAXON?

"MY children," Dr. Johnson used to say to his friends, "deliver yourselves from cant." Every age has its cant, which, in some of the thousand forms of the thing, is the prevailing rage. That of our own time is Anglo-Saxon glorification. Not a day passes, but we read in print, or hear from the platform, the eternal, hackneyed boasting about our "manifest destiny,"—the same wearisome ding-dong about the Anglo-Saxon energy, and the rapidity with which the race is belting the globe, and supplanting the laws, manners, and customs of every other people. This cant has been echoed and re-echoed, —in newspaper articles, stump speeches, Congressional harangues, and even in works on ethnology,—till it has become a nuisance. We are as sick of it as ever Dr. Johnson was of the everlasting "Second Punic War." "Who will deliver me from the Greeks and Romans?" cried in agony the classic-ridden Frenchman. "Who will deliver us from the Anglo-Saxon?" despairingly cry we.

There are in the United States some six or eight millions of people who are descended from the Anglo-Saxons,—and that is probably all. That population is to be found principally in New England, side by side with men of every clime and land; not a very stupendous item, is it, out of some forty-two millions of men, women, and children, who think and toil between the St. Croix River and the Bay of San Francisco? True, these forty-

two millions all, or nine-tenths of them, speak the language of Shakspeare and Bacon; but this no more proves them the descendants of that race which was first whipped by a few Scandinavian filibusters, and afterward thrashed, held by the throats, and ruled with a rod of iron when they complained, for century after century, by a handful of Normans, than the wearing of woolen proves a man a sheep, or drinking lager beer proves him a Dutchman.

Who are the men who have built up this nation and made it the great republic it is? Are they all, or nearly all, of Anglo-Saxon birth or descent? Not to speak of the Swiss, the Huguenots, the Dutch, and other minor peoples, let us look at the Irish contingent to American greatness. From the very first settlement of the country, in field and street, at the plow, in the Senate, and on the battle-field, Irish energy was represented. Maryland and South Carolina were largely peopled by Hibernians. Maine, New Hampshire, and Kentucky received many Irish emigrants. During the first half of the last century, the emigration from Ireland to this country was not less than a quarter of a million. When our forefathers threw off the British yoke, the Irish formed a sixth or seventh of the whole population, and one-fourth of all the commissioned officers in the army and navy were of Irish descent. The first general officer killed in battle, the first officer of artillery appointed, the first Commodore commissioned, the first victor to whom the British flag was struck at sea, and the first officer who surprised a fort by land, were Irishmen; and with such enthusiasm did the emigrants from "the Green Isle" espouse the cause of liberty, that Lord Mountjoy declared

in Parliament, "You lost America by the Irish." We will not speak of the physical development of America, to which two generations of Irish laborers have chiefly contributed, but for the constant supply of which the buffalo might still be browsing in the Genesee Valley, and "Forty-second street" be "out of town" (speaking *Hibernice*) in New York; we will confine ourselves to the men of brain who have leavened the mass of bone and sinew by which our material prosperity has been worked out. Who were the Carrolls, the Rutledges, the Fitzsimmons, and the McKeans, of the Revolution? — whence came Andrew Jackson, Robert Emmet, J. C. Calhoun, and McDuffie, of a later day? — whence the projector of the Erie Canal, the inventor of the first steamboat, and the builder of the first American railroad? — whence two of our leading sculptors, Powers and Crawford? — whence our most distinguished political economist, Carey? — whence the Hero of Winchester, whom all the people of the North have delighted to honor? They were all Irish by birth or descent.

Even to the Welsh element in our population, our country is indebted in no small degree for its prosperity. Of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, eighteen had Welsh blood in their veins, and among them were Samuel Adams, John Adams, Stephen Hopkins, Francis Hopkinson, Robert Morris, B. Gwinnett, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Harrison, Richard H. Lee, and Francis H. Lee. Among our Revolutionary Generals, the brave Montgomery, who fell at Quebec, "Mad" Anthony Wayne, the fiery Ethan Allen, and David Morgan, together with Charles Lee, John Cadwallader, and many others, were of Welsh blood; and so were six of our Presidents, viz.: John

Adams, Jefferson, Monroe, J. Q. Adams, Harrison, and Buchanan. We may add that President Grant, to whom the Republic is indebted more than to any other man since Washington, is not of Anglo-Saxon descent, but of Norman, *via* Scotland.

If, leaving history, we look to the moral and physiological traits of the American people, we shall find them clearly distinguished from those of the Anglo-Saxons. The English people and the American differ widely in mind, feeling, temper, and manners; and these differences may be traced to the characteristics of nations who have mingled the stream of their life with the current derived from England. We have far quicker sensibilities than the English, both of affection and of wrath, being kindlier in our gentle mood, and more fiery when irritated. Along with this inflammable temper, we have an originality of invention, a discursiveness of inquiry, a keen quest of novelty, a fertility of expedients, a contempt for antiquated laws, customs, and precedents, which strikingly contrast with the timidity and caution, the conservative and creeping policy of the English.

How we came to be infected by the Anglo-Saxon mania, it would be hard to tell. Even in England it is ridiculous enough; but there it is beginning to be laughed at by men of sense, who perceive the absurdity of Englishmen claiming to be Anglo-Saxons, when there is no such race in existence, and never was. Those who echo this boast, should read Defoe's "True-born Englishman," in which, at a time when it was customary to denounce King William as "a foreigner," the author was at pains to instruct his countrymen how many mongrel races had conspired to form "that vain, ill-natured thing, an Eng-

lishman," and showed in limping verse, but unanswerable logic, that

> "A True-born Englishman's a contradiction —
> In speech an irony, in fact a fiction;
> A metaphor invented to express
> A man AKIN to all the universe."

Anything more motley and heterogeneous than the Anglo-Saxon blood, even before the Norman invasion, made up, as it was, from the veins of Britons, Romans, Saxons, Picts, Scots, and Danes, it would be hard to conceive. It began with the Celtic, of which it is a dilution, —that very Celtic with which certain writers are fond of telling us it is in deadly antagonism and enmity; next comes the Roman blood,—a blood shared, more or less, by every people in Southern and Western Europe, to say nothing of parts of Asia and Africa,—and which, we know, was derived from a mingling together of all the races of ancient Italy and the ancient world; and then follows the blood of the Picts and Scots, the Jutes, Frisians, Angles, and Saxons, the Danes, and, last of all, the Normans, who, as Dr. Latham says, were, from first to last, *Celtic* on the mother's side, and on that of the father, Celtic, Roman, and German, and hence brought over to England only the elements they had before,—Celtic, Roman, German, and Norse. All this shows plainly that the idea of an Anglo-Saxon race, composed of pure Anglian and Saxon elements, is sheer nonsense. It shows that the English Anglo-Saxon race is composed of the same constituents as the other leading European races, not excepting the French; and that hence it is simply absurd for Americans to call themselves Anglo-Saxons, when they have confounded, and are daily more and more confounding, the confusion of the English blood by infusions from the veins of all the other nations of Europe.

The truth is, that, made up as we are, of so many nationalities, "pigging together, heads and points, in one truckle-bed," we are as mixed, piebald, and higgledy-piggledy a race as the sun ever looked down upon. Compared with us, the Romans, who first comprised all the vagabonds of Italy, and finally incorporated into the empire all the semi-barbarians of Europe, were a homogeneous race. To plume ourselves upon our Anglo-Saxon extraction, is as ridiculous as the inordinate pride of ancestry rebuked by Defoe, which led the self-styled "True-born Englishmen" of his day to sneer at the Dutch:

> "Forgetting that themselves are all derived
> From the most scoundrel race that ever lived.
> A horrid crowd of rambling thieves and drones,
> Who ransacked kingdoms and dispeopled towns;
> The Pict and painted Briton, treacherous Scot,
> By hunger, theft, and rapine hither brought;
> Norwegian pirates, buccaneering Danes,
> Whose red-haired offspring everywhere remains;
> Who, joined with Norman French, compound the breed,
> From whence your 'True-born Englishmen' proceed."

When we think how much we, in common with the English people, are indebted to the sturdy old Norman kings and barons for our liberties, we have still less reason for joining in the cant of Anglo-Saxonism. Who was it that established in England the right of trial by jury; that commuted personal service in the field for a fair scutage; that taxed nobles and commons alike, and struck the hardest blows at the tyranny of feudal lords over their vassals? Who was it that summoned the first English House of Commons; that gave England her judicial circuits; that opposed the stoutest and most effectual resistance to the encroachments of the Roman

See? In each case it was a Norman King. It was the Norman Kings who first forbade appeals to Rome, and denied to the Papal legates permission to be received as such within the realm; and it was the sturdy Norman barons who, when John Lackland stooped to resign his crown and kingdom into the hands of a Papal legate, and to receive it back as a Papal fief, rose against the coward, and forced the signing of Magna Charta. If we are proud of our descent from the Saxons, let us not forget that we have also the blood of the old Scandinavian vikings in our veins, and that but for this infusion of Norse fire into their cold Saxon nature, the nation from which we have derived our political and religious liberties, might have bequeathed to us the same institutions that prevail on the Continent of Europe.

Out, then, upon this stereotyped laudation of the Anglo-Saxon race and its progress! There is nothing more dangerous to our political unity than this miserable cant about "races," and especially this gabble about Anglo-Saxon blood, which we hear so often in the United States. It is just such talk as this which has caused many civil wars in Europe,—which in 1848 set the Germans and the different Slavic races to cutting each other's throats; and it has led to similar horrors in our own country. It has already roused the jealousy of our South American neighbors, whom our demagogues are so fond of teaching us to regard as an inferior race, and therefore doomed to be our prey,—the victims of our "manifest destiny." Those Americans who join in these vauntings,—proclaiming that we are a great people because we are of the same stock as the English,—forget that this self-stultification is anything but creditable to

them; that it detracts from rather than adds to the dignity of the American character. Instead of blushing or hanging down our heads on account of our mixed origin, we should be proud of it, for all history, ancient and modern, shows that it is by the *fusion* of race that all great and vigorous new races are made. All the powerful nations of Europe have been reconstituted,—made anew,—in this way, and those are the weakest which have received the least stimulus of admixture. "The purest populations of Europe," says that distinguished ethnologist, Dr. Latham, "are the Basques, the Lapps, the Poles, and the Frisians," —confessedly among the weakest and most insignificant tribes of Europe; and he adds that "the most powerful nations are the most heterogeneous." The British are in many respects the most powerful people of Europe, and they are also the most heterogeneous. We are still more mixed, and every day blends new elements with our blood, making our pedigree more and more a puzzle. Considering how much Celtic, Scandinavian, and other blood runs in our veins, this Anglo-Saxon glorification in our republic is peculiarly invidious, exasperating, and misplaced. America is not Anglo-Saxon any more than it is Norman or Celtic; it is the grand asylum and *home of humanity*, where people of every race and clime under the whole Heaven may stand erect on one unvarying plane of political and religious equality,—feel that, despite "the lack of titles, power and pelf," they are men "for a' that,"—and bless Heaven that they have work to do, food to eat, books to read, and the privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences. Such may it ever remain!

A DAY AT OXFORD.

AMONG the thousand interesting places which the American traveler may visit in Europe, there are none which have a greater charm for the scholar than the two university towns of England, Oxford and Cambridge. Whatever the architectural beauties or the historic glories he finds in the Continental towns, there is no one in which he lingers so long and lovingly, no one from which he at last tears himself away with such a pang of reluctance, as from these ancient seats of learning. It is now five years since we first enjoyed the intense pleasure of treading the quadrangles, the gardens and the halls of the two universities; and though we have since visited many other places of world-renowned beauty, and hallowed by historic memories, yet there is no one the mention of which conjures up so many pleasant recollections of hours too quickly passed,— hours in which eye and ear, mind and soul, were intoxicated with delight,— as do the names of these famous towns. To which of these haunts of learning the palm of beauty is to be given, it is as hard as it would be invidious to say. Neither has its parallel elsewhere in the world. There is something absolutely unapproachable in the scenes that greet the eye behind the colleges at Cambridge, where the Cam steals along between frequent arches, and groves, and lawns, and beneath the shadows of venerable edifices; there is no other quadrangle in the world like the great quadrangle of

Trinity; nor can Oxford boast of any chapel equal to that of King's College, with its huge buttresses, its immense windows, its profusion of exquisite carvings, and quaint fret-work, and above all, its wondrous stone roof,

> "Self-poised and scooped into ten thousand cells,
> Where light and shade repose, where music dwells,
> Lingering,—and wandering as loth to die;
> Like thoughts whose very sweetness yieldeth proof
> That they were born for immortality."

Yet the view of Oxford, with its multiplicity of turrets, pinnacles, and towers, rising in the bosom of a beautiful valley, amid waters and gardens, fully merits Wordsworth's epithet of "overpowering;" and he who can look upon this "City of Palaces," hoary with ancestral honors, and rich in treasures of bibliography, science, and art, and not exclaim with the poet,

> "Robed in the grandeur of thy waving woods,
> Girt with a silver zone of winding floods,
> Fair art thou, Oxford!"

must be as dull as the clod he treads upon. It was an excusable burst of enthusiasm in Robert Hall, when, standing on the summit of the Radcliffe Library, he was so impressed with the beauty of the scene,—the dark and ancient edifices, clustering together in forms full of richness and beauty,—the quadrangles, gardens, and groves, —the flowing rivers and belting hills, wood-crowned,— and, over all, the clear, blue-flecked sky,—that he cried out, "Sir, sir, it is surely the New Jerusalem come down from Heaven!"

It is, of course, impossible, within the limits of a brief essay, to speak of a tithe of the interesting things one may see in even a day's visit to a city like Oxford or Cambridge. The name Oxford is derived from the "Ox-

fords" about the city, the particular ford being at Binsey or North Hincksey. The city is of great antiquity, and from an early period was one of considerable importance, Nearly every British sovereign has visited it, some have lived in it, and Parliament has assembled in it on twenty different occasions. The zealous antiquaries of the town have even claimed that the first English printing-press was set up in Oxford, Corsellis having printed a book there in 1468, four years before Caxton set up a press at Westminster. It is much more certain that the first British martyrs, that suffered for renouncing the Roman Catholic faith, were Oxford men. Thirty Baptists of this city were punished for heresy, in the time of Henry II, by starvation without the walls. The University consists of twenty Colleges and five Halls, or unendowed societies. The oldest (University) is said to date back to 886; the latest (Keble) was founded in 1868. The entrances to the town are all more or less picturesque, except that from the railway station, and three of them cross those beautiful meandering streams which the Oxonians dignify with the names of rivers,—the Thames (here called the "Isis") and the "Cherwell." In the good old days, before the scream of the locomotive was heard in this charming valley, the visitor, from whatever direction he came, got from the top of the stage-coach a glorious view of the city. The one that bursts upon you from the Abingdon road, especially, is of such ineffable beauty that it must quicken the pulse of the veriest dunce. It is one of those rare sights that always fill a painter's heart with delight, and might be put at once on canvas without the change of a feature. We, of course, came by rail, and, entering the town from the west, felt little throbbing of the heart till

we reached "the heart of its mystery." Strolling along with no guide but our Murray, we passed the Castle, built in William Rufus's time, now used as a gaol, and soon found ourselves in High street, where the *genius loci* at once seized upon us, and we realized that we were standing in the intellectual birth-place of Hooker, Hampden, Wyckliffe, and many another

"Giant of mighty bone and high emprise,"

of whose victories not only Englishmen, but Americans, are proud.

This famous street, the pride of Oxford, at once charms the stranger by its beauty, and increasing intimacy only deepens his admiration. The citizens of Oxford may well be pardoned for believing that it has few rivals in the world. It is certainly a noble street, being eighty-five feet in width, and lined with buildings of the most impressive orders of architecture, the parallels of which are to be found nowhere else in the "silver-coasted isle." The great and rich variety of buildings,—colleges and churches mingling with modern shops and old-fashioned dwellings,—and the remarkable diversity of the styles in which they are built, are brought, by the gentle curvature of the street, into the most pleasant combination and contrast imaginable. The churches of St. Mary-the-Virgin, All Saints', and St. Martin, together with the Colleges of All Souls', University, Queen's, and Magdalen's, present a *coup d'œil* of the rarest beauty, worth almost a trip across the Atlantic to see. Up this street it was that went the sad procession of students to the Bible *Auto-da-Fé* in 1527. Carrying each his Bible and a fagot, they marched slowly and gloomily to Christ Church, thence to the place where the sacred books were thrown into the

flames. Down this street it was that on March 20, 1556, Cranmer slowly wended his weary steps, bowed with years and trouble, on his way to St. Mary's Church, to protest against "the great thing that troubled his conscience," his renunciation of his Protestant faith; and it was but a stone's throw from here that, with Latimer and Ridley, he received his "baptism of fire." The waist-shackle of Cranmer is still preserved, and the bailiff's account for burning him, which is as follows:

One hundred wood fagots	£0	6	8
One hundred and fifty furze fagots	0	3	4
Carriage of them	0	0	8
Two laborers	0	1	4
	£0	12	0

As we followed "the stream-like windings of that glorious street," as Wordsworth terms them, evidences that we were in a University-town presented themselves on every side. Bookstores abounded, their windows filled with classics and rare old tomes; and in other shops were exposed for sale gowns, surplices, academical caps, and the colored silken hoods that denote the various degrees of University rank. At every step we encountered persons in the costume worn by the President of Harvard College at Commencement, and which, a few years ago, when worn occasionally by undergraduates, provoked the biting ridicule of the Boston butcher-boys and truckmen.

The richest and most extensive of all the Oxford colleges is Christ Church, and to that we took our way. This superb structure, "at once a Cathedral and a College," owes its foundation to the "King-Cardinal" Wolsey, who felt so deep an anxiety about its completion that, in the midst of his trials, he earnestly begged the

King to let the work go on. To this college and to Trinity College, Cambridge, resort all the princes and nobles of Great Britain who desire a liberal education; and from this foundation have gone forth a long line of illustrious statesmen, who have found no superiors in the House of Commons in scholarship, eloquence or ability. Four great religious movements have had their origin in this establishment,—Wyckliffe's in the fourteenth century, James the Second's in the seventeenth, Wesley's and Whitefield's in the eighteenth, and Dr. Pusey's in the nineteenth. Nothing can be more imposing than the exterior of this college; its long front of four hundred feet, with its turrets and balustrades, fill the mind at once with ideas of amplitude, magnificence and power. Through the grand gateway, above which, in the beautiful cupola which crowns it, hangs the bell, "Great Tom," weighing seventeen thousand pounds, you enter the largest quadrangle (or "quad") in Oxford. The bell, we may say in passing, originally hung in Osney Abbey campanille, "the largest and loudest of Osney bells"; and, as Milton wrote his "Il Penseroso" within four miles of Oxford, it is supposed that it was the sound of "Tom," borne over the waters in time of flood, that he had in mind when he wrote the famous musical lines,

> "Over some wide-watered shore,
> Swinging slow with sullen roar."

The buildings of this, as of all the colleges, form a square, or series of squares, with generally a green lawn in the centre, sometimes a reservoir and fountain; here and there trees are planted, and sometimes the walls are completely covered with ivy. After a few admiring glances at the "quads," we visit the Hall, a magnificent

room, among the finest in Europe. It is one hundred and fifteen feet long and fifty feet high, and has a roof of Irish oak, carved and decorated in the most elaborate manner, and adorned with nearly three hundred armorial bearings of the two founders, Cardinal Wolsey and Henry VIII. The walls on both sides are lined with portraits of the benefactors of the college, over one hundred in number, and all specimens of the best masters. Holbein, Lely, Vandyke, Hogarth, Raphael, Reynolds, and many other artists hardly less celebrated, have contributed to the riches of this gallery. Though three to four centuries old, the Hall has none of the dust or decay of age, but looks as fresh and bright as if finished but yesterday. Here the scholars of Christ Church dine; the Peers, Dean and Canons occupying the raised dais at the upper end, the Masters and Bachelors the side-tables, and the undergraduates the lower end of the hall. Here Henry VIII, Edward VI, James I, Charles I, and other English Kings and Queens, have been entertained with plays, declamations, and banquets; here Handel, the great composer, gave concerts; here, in June, 1814, the Allied Sovereigns, with Blucher, Metternich, and a host of other celebrities,—nine hundred persons in all,—sat down to a princely feast.

Besides this gallery of portraits the college has in the Library building another splendid collection of paintings, chiefly of Italian schools, some of them belonging to the oldest periods of Italian art. The library is a beautiful apartment, 142 feet by 30 feet, and 37 high. The ceiling is richly ornamented with delicate stucco work, and the wainscoat and pillars are of the finest Norway oak. The room is full of literary treasures and curiosities, and adorned with antique statues and busts. If the visitor has time,

he should take a peep into the kitchen, and see a good specimen of an old English cooking-room. Here he will see a huge gridiron moved on wheels, 4½ feet long by 4 feet wide, used before the introduction of spits and ranges, and upon which a whole bullock might have been broiled as easily as a single steak at one of the ranges of these degenerate days. Leaving this unique *cuisine*, we next proceed to the magnificent Cathedral, now the chapel of the college, but originally the Priory Church of St. Frideswide. To describe fully this fine building, which is a cruciform 154 feet in length, would require an entire article. The beauty of the choir, with the massive Saxon pillars on each side, and the double arches springing from their capitals, through the air, and meeting in the centre the solid arches of the ceiling, with its rich pendants, is such as to baffle description. The Cathedral is rich in altar-tombs, illuminated windows, and monuments of rare workmanship as well as great antiquity,—among which are that of that prodigy of out-of-the-way learning, Robert Burton, the author of "The Anatomy of Melancholy," and that of Bishop Berkeley, the metaphysician, whose tombstone is inscribed with Pope's eulogy, "To Berkeley every virtue under heaven."

The New Buildings, built in the modern Venetian Gothic style, 300 feet in length, and containing fifty luxurious sets of rooms, next attract our attention; after which we visit the shaded walks in the meadows between Christ Church and the Isis, than which it is hard to conceive of a more beautiful scholarly retreat. These consist of "The New Meadow Walk," six hundred yards long, extending from the New Buildings to the river; and "Broad Walk," a splendid avenue of a quarter of a mile in length

and fifty feet in width, lined on each side with lofty elms, whose meeting tops form in a hot day a most delicious shade. The eminent men of whom Christ Church boasts as its scholars form of themselves a dazzling host. Among them are William Penn, Locke, Ben Jonson, the two Wesleys, Camden the antiquary, Otway, Dr. E. B. Pusey, Sir Robert Peel, Gladstone, Sir G. C. Lewis, Ruskin, Lord Derby, and scores of others whose names have been sounded hardly less loudly by the trump of fame.

Leaving Christ Church, we visited college after college, which we found to differ in detail, but all agreeing in their general plan, and presenting something to charm or surprise the traveller. Stepping out of the busy streets, — for in this respect the city contrasts with Cambridge, which has a more quiet, scholastic air, — you go through an arched gateway, and at once find yourself enjoying the beautiful lawns, the trees, ivy, flowers, and fountains of a quadrangle. No person with a spark of enthusiasm or love for the picturesque and beautiful, who has once seen these venerable piles, can ever forget the impression made on him by their cool cloisters, whose pavements are the tombstones of departed worthies; their statues of Kings, Queens, and benefactors; their quaint and grotesque gargoyles; their libraries filled with the rarest books and manuscripts; their chapels adorned with the monuments of the mighty men who have made England the home of freedom, letters, and the arts; their vaulted roofs; their lofty columns; the splendors of their painted windows, that blaze like sparkling jewels in the sunlight; and, if he has been so fortunate as to enjoy a general view of Oxford's glories from the roof of the Radcliffe Library, or the tower of New College, he must be made of sterner stuff

than flesh and blood if he has not cried out with Wordsworth,

> "Ye spires of Oxford! domes and towers!
> Gardens and groves! Your presence overpowers
> The soberness of reason."

Near by Christ Church is Pembroke College, once the nest of those "singing birds," Beaumont, Heywood, and Shenstone, and the Alma Mater of the eloquent George Whitefield and the sturdy John Pym. Here that quaint old fantast, Sir Thomas Browne, studied; and here, over the gateway, on the second floor, roomed heroic Samuel Johnson, a commoner, "poor as the poorest, proud as the proudest"; so poor that he had but one pair of shoes, and those so old that his feet peeped through them,—so proud that, when a new pair was placed by a gentleman's order outside of his door, he indignantly flung them out of the window. Indigence drove Johnson away, long before the usual time, from Pembroke; but, though steeped in poverty to the lips, he read, as he said, "solidly," while there, and always regarded his Alma Mater with the profoundest veneration and love.

The oldest of the Oxford colleges is Merton, on our way to which we pass between two others, of which we must say a word or two. One, Corpus Christi, was founded in Henry the Eighth's reign, by Bishop Fox, in memory of whom a tame fox was kept in the college for many years. Had Corpus nothing else to boast of but those two giants of the English Church, Bishop Jewell and the judicious Hooker, who were her sons, she might well be proud; but she reckons in her roll many worthy successors of these giants, including that "gulf of learning," John Rainolds, Dr. Buckland, and John Keble, whose "Christian Year" had reached, seven years ago, its 110th

edition and 265th thousand. Directly opposite Corpus is Oriel College, endowed by Edward II, in 1326. Its buildings are not remarkable, but it may challenge any other college to show a more splendid muster-roll of names. Here were trained Sir Walter Raleigh; Chief Justice Holt; Bishop Butler, the author of that impregnable bulwark of Christianity, the "Analogy of Natural and Revealed Religion"; Prynne, the stout Republican, whose ears were cut off by Charles I; J. H. Newman, the famous "fugitive from the camp of Anglicanism," a man of noble intellect and antique loftiness of soul, and one of the greatest masters of English of this century; Dr. Copleston; Archbishop Whately, whose "Logic" has crucified the wits of so many students; Matthew Arnold; "Tom Brown" Hughes; Bishop Ken, the hymnist; and Richard H. Froude, from whom emanated the famous "Tractarian" movement; and scores of other men hardly less illustrious. Merton, "the primary model of all the collegiate bodies in Oxford and Cambridge," merits a minuter notice than our space permits us to give. It has three quadrangles, in one of the smallest of which is the chapel, which, in grandeur of proportion, ranks second to none in Oxford. The side windows, of which there are fourteen, illuminated in imitation of those at Cologne, are marvels of beauty; and the great east or Catherine-wheel window is filled with tracery that is rarely matched in delicacy. In looking at the architectural triumphs of this and many other chapels in Oxford, where

> "Through mullioned windows' tinted panes
> The colored radiance softly falls,
> And dyes with flickering roseate stains
> The nave and aisle, the floor and walls,"

one is tempted again and again to ask, Where did these

old masons of the Middle Ages learn the secrets of their skill? They certainly seem to have had more cunning fingers than their modern successors, and to have moulded their stone-tracery as though they were working in some plastic material. In the Middle Ages, Merton College was famous for its professors in scholastic theology. Bradwardine, the great "doctor doctorum"; John Duns Scotus, the acutest and most subtle-witted of the schoolmen, whose name, by a hard fate, has become a synonym for stupidity (dunce); Occam, the "invincible"; John Wyckliffe, Sir Richard Steele, and Harvey, who discovered the circulation of the blood,—all belonged to Merton.

Next in age to Merton, but some distance from it, is Balliol College, founded in the thirteenth century, of which Prof. Jowett, of the famous "Essays and Reviews" memory, is Master. Here Adam Smith the economist, Archbishop Manning, and Bishop Temple, Dr. Arnold's successor at Rugby, were educated. Among the Masters of Balliol in the eighteenth century was a noted wit and punster, Dr. Theophilus Leigh. His conversation was a perpetual stream of jests and retorts; but his most successful practical joke was living to over ninety, when he had been elected Master on account of his weak health and likelihood to die early. As a specimen of his *jeux d'esprit*, it is said that, when some one told him how, in a late dispute among the Privy Councilors, the Lord Chancellor struck the table with such violence that he split it, Dr. Leigh replied, "No, no; I can hardly persuade myself that he *split the table*, though I believe he *divided the Board*." Almost in death the ruling passion triumphed. Being told, in his last sickness, that a friend had been lately married, that he had recovered from a

long illness by eating eggs, and that the wits said he had been *egged* on to matrimony, the Doctor at once trumped the joke by adding, "Then may the *yoke* sit easy on him." It was to Dr. Parsons, the forty-fourth Master of this College, afterwards Vice-Chancellor of the University, that Theodore Hook made his reply when he matriculated, at Oxford. Being asked if he was "prepared to subscribe to the Thirty-nine Articles," Theodore replied, "Oh, certainly, sir; *forty*, if you please!"

Leaving Balliol, we stroll down Broad street, and, attracted by the sound of music, enter the gardens of New College, which, like New York, belies its name, having been founded in 1379 by William of Wykeham. The gardens are charmingly retired, and among the most beautiful of the many delicious retreats which Oxford offers to the weary or meditative scholar. We wonder not that our countryman, the shy, contemplative Hawthorne, was ravished by this "sweet, quiet, stately, sacred seclusion,"—these lawns of the richest green and softest velvet grass, shadowed over by ancient trees, and sheltered from the rude winds; for we can conceive of nothing more delightful than to spend an hour's leisure, earned by a half-dozen hours of hard study, in lounging about or lying down in these lovely grounds, building air-castles, planning new intellectual conquests, or musing over the days of "lang syne." The charm of the gardens is enhanced by the picturesque views one gets here of the college-buildings; and one hears with interest that the boundary on one side is the ancient city-wall which Cromwell's artillery battered at the siege of the town. The music that drew us here comes from a fine band attached to a military company of the students, which

plays two or three afternoons in the week for the delight of the scholars and their outside friends. The concert ended, we attend the evening service in the chapel, and listen to some of the most exquisite choral harmonies that have ever

"from eating cares
Lapped us in soft Lydian airs."

The choir of singers is the best-trained, and the chapel by general consent the noblest, in Oxford. The choir is one hundred feet long; the nave, or ante-chapel, eighty feet; it is sixty-five feet high, and thirty-five broad. The style of architecture is the early perpendicular, retaining much of the simplicity of the decorated, but displaying the decided peculiarities of the later style. The organ, whose capabilities are gloriously revealed in the choral service, is one of the finest in England. But the grand attraction to most visitors is the illuminated windows designed by Sir Joshua Reynolds, Peckett of York, and the pupils of Rubens, which, if beauty, not the admission of light, be the object of windows, must be deemed worthy of high admiration. The original sketches for the great west window, by Reynolds, were sold at auction, it is said, in 1821, for £7,229 5s. In this chapel is preserved the silver-gilt pastoral staff of the founder, seven feet long, — an exquisite relic of the finished style of the jewelers' work, with enamels, of the period, and of the most elaborate workmanship. Lack of space prevents more than an allusion to the massive tower of this college, with its fine peal of bells, upon which is inscribed Wykeham's motto, "Manners makyth man"; and to the cloisters, with their remarkable echo, repeating sounds seven or eight times. New College boasts many famous sons. It was these cloisters that echoed Sydney Smith's jokes

and laughter; and it was within these walls that William Pitt (Lord Chatham) learned to plume his wings for his grand oratorical flights.

Beautiful as is New College, with its grand old turreted tower, its splendid chapel, and its shaded grounds, it must yield the palm to Magdalen, the magnificent, (for that is the meaning of its Syriac name,) which we are inclined to look upon as the gem of the Oxford colleges. Magdalen is, truly, a glorious establishment, and we do not wonder that the old University laureate, Antony a' Wood, in singing its praises, bursts into a rapturous strain, quite above his usual prosaic style. Grand old buildings this college has, that gladden the eye and captivate the imagination, from the

> "High embowed roof
> With antique pillars massy proof,"

and the stately tower with its "tunable and melodious ring of bells," down to studious cloisters; trim gardens, too, it has, full of rare plants and flowers; smooth-shaven lawns, and arched walks of twilight groves; water-walks "as delectable as the banks of Eurotas, where Apollo himself was wont to walk and sing his lays"; and rivers which so pleasantly, and with a murmuring noise, wind and turn, that we are almost ready to agree with honest Wood, that one may, in a manner, say of them that which the people of Angouleme, in France, were wont to say of their River Touvre, that it is "covered over and checkered with swans, paved and floored with trouts, and hemmed and bordered with crevices." The buildings of this college which are comprised within three quadrangles, cover an area of three acres. The grounds comprise more than one hundred acres. Entering the college by the beauti-

ful new gateway, with its canopied statues of Mary Magdalen, St. John the Baptist, and the founder (William Waynflete, Lord Chancellor of England in the reign of Henry VI), we are greeted with one of the most striking displays of architectural beauty in Oxford. Directly fronting us is the west end of the chapel, with a gorgeous window, and beneath it an elaborately-ornamented doorway, with a shallow porch richly sculptured, and surmounted by five statues in canopied niches,—which, with the lofty tower, one hundred and fifty feet high, with its diadem of pinnacles and fretted battlements, forms one of the most imposing spectacles we have yet witnessed. The chapel, which, about forty years ago was thoroughly restored, at an expense of £28,000, is an architectural gem. The altar-screen, the oak seats and stalls, the organ-screen of stone,—all the carvings, whether of stone or wood,—are executed with the rarest felicity. Magnificent candelabra, exquisite paintings, and superb painted windows, are among the other beauties of this unique place of worship; and when we add the powerful organ, which Cromwell carried off to Hampton Court, but which Charles II restored, it must be admitted that this chapel has few peers even in this land of chapels. We regret that it was not our good fortune to attend a choral service in it, and hear

> "The pealing organ blow
> To the full-voiced choir below";

for it is said to be solemn and impressive in a degree rarely equaled.

Visiting the library; the cloisters, with their grotesque figures, which have so puzzled the antiquaries: and the hall, hung around with portraits; we next pass by a nar-

row passage into the chaplain's quadrangle, where we have another glorious view of the tower, from its base to the top. Its simplicity of structure and its graceful proportions,— its union of real solidity with extreme lightness of appearance,— make it one of the finest structures of its class in England. Tradition says that upon the top formerly, on every May morning at four o'clock, a requiem was sung for the soul of Henry VII; and the custom of chanting a hymn there, beginning

> "Te Deum Patrem colimus,
> Te laudibus prosequimur,"

on the same morning each year, is still preserved.

How shall we do justice to the charming grounds of Magdalen,— the meadows with their winding, tree-embowered walks along the banks of the Cherwell, their rustic bridges, and the peep at the antique-looking water-mill? Can any trees be grander, any lawns more soft and pleasant, any scholastic retreats more cool and shady, any views more picturesque than these? And then that dainty relic of monastic days, the little Deer-Park; how Old-World-like it seems, as another has said, to step out of the High-street of a great city upon a quiet, secluded nook, where deer are quite unconcernedly browsing among huge old elms! It was in these learned groves that Addison loved to linger; here Gibbon studied; here the melancholy Collins wooed the genius of poetry; here glorious "Kit North" drank his earliest draughts of hippocrene; and here, in ages to come, will many other Englishmen, of equal genius, echo the words of Antony a' Wood:

> "Thou dear old college, by whatever name
> Natives or strangers call our Oxford "Queen,"
> To me, from days long past, thou art the same,
> Maudlin — or Magdalen — or Magdalene."

Leaving Magdalen, we next proceed to the Bodleian library, founded in 1409, and refounded by "that full solempne man," Sir Thomas Bodley, in 1602. This vast collection comprises about four hundred thousand volumes,—a wilderness of books,—and is remarkable not only for its size, but for the peculiar character of its "volumed wonders." It is said that no other library of similar extent in Europe,—none in Paris, Brussels, Frankfort, Munich, Valladolid, or Madrid,—has so conventual a character. Associated with all the great traditions of England, from the age of Duke Humphrey, its original founder, down to the present century,—from the days when Queen Elizabeth, in ruff and farthingale, with Burghley and Walsingham at her side, harangued the doctors and Heads of Houses in Latin, to the time when the Allied Sovereigns celebrated the downfall of Napoleon within its walls,—it is no wonder that its treasures of books, manuscripts, and rarities have a kind of uniqueness and quaint antiquity about them, not found elsewhere. An adequate account of the bibliographical curiosities which are accumulated here would fill a goodly volume. Truly may the scholar, as he sits in the reading cells and curtained cages of "old Bodley," murky in its antiquity, redolent of old bindings, fragrant with moth-scented coverings, say with Southey,

> "My days among the dead are passed,
> Around me I behold,
> Where'er these casual eyes are cast,
> The mighty minds of old."

Here are a "History of Troy," printed by Caxton at Bruges in 1472, the first book printed in the English language; a copy of Caedmon's Anglo-Saxon version of Genesis, made about A. D. 1000; a Bible collection, including almost

every known version; an Aldine edition of Ovid's "Metamorphoses," containing a genuine autograph of Shakespeare; a Latin Bible printed by Gutenberg at Mentz about 1455, the first book printed from movable types; an Italian sermon, translated by Queen Elizabeth into Latin, whilst Princess, and written in her own handwriting; and hundreds of other similar rarities. Here are the collections of Dr. Dee, the earliest of spirit-rappers, who "did observe and write down what was said by the spirits"; here are garnered up all the correspondence of Lord Clarendon, and the little notes that passed between him and Charles I, in the lobby of the House of Commons, during the debates that cost the King his crown; and here, too, are the correspondence of the Parliamentary generals, and the papers of the famous non-jurors. Passing to the upper story of the library building, we enter the Picture Gallery, which comprises three sides of the quadrangle. The pictures are chiefly portraits of benefactors of the University and of eminent literary men, by Vandyke, Lily, Kneller, Jansen, Reynolds, and others. Along the centre of the rooms are models of the ancient temples of Greece and Italy; a very curious one of a subterranean palace in Guzerat; an elaborate model of the Cathedral of Calcutta; and one of the Maison Carrée of Nismes in France. Among the rarities in the room are a chair made out of "The Golden Hind," the ship in which Drake circumnavigated the globe, and the veritable lantern of Guy Fawkes.

Our sketch is long, and yet we have said nothing of the Arundel marbles; nothing of the Ratcliffe library, with its antique statues, busts, Italian marbles, and especially, its lofty dome, from the balustrade surrounding whose exterior you may have a fine panoramic view of the "city of spires

and pinnacles"; nothing of the magnificent Taylor Institute, with its art-treasures, including paintings, statues, original drawings by Raphael and Angelo, purchased at a cost of £7,000, and which are marked with all the beauty and grandeur that distinguished their public works; nothing of the Ashmolean Museum, or the New Museum (346 feet by 145), packed full with collections and specimens in every department of science; nothing of the exquisitely-beautiful Martyrs' Memorial, 73 feet high, with richly-canopied statues, erected near the spot where the three Bishops,—Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer,—in blinding smoke and tormenting flames, yielded up their lives at the stake; and we have barely alluded to St. Mary's Church, whose "symmetric pride" so dazzles the beholder when the pale moonlight falls on spire, buttresses, statues, and pinnacles. As we look back in imagination upon these sights and scenes, to which we bade adieu but a few years ago, they flit before us, though fixed forever in the mind, like the pleasant memories of a dream. Even after a hurried peep at the glories of this vast establishment, we cease to wonder that Lipsius, on first beholding them, declared with fervor that one college of this university was greater in its power and splendor, that it glorified and illustrated the honors of literature more conspicuously by the pomps with which it invested the ministers and machinery of education, than any entire university of the Continent. Go, reader, and see for yourself this home of letters, and you will confess that we have not told you half the truth of this wondrous town, which you will evermore think of as

> "A rich gem, in circling gold enshrined,
> Where Isis' waters wind
> Along the sweetest shore
> That ever felt fair Culture's hands,
> Or Spring's embroidered mantle wore."

AN HOUR AT CHRIST'S HOSPITAL.

AMONG the strange and unique sights which attract the eye of the stranger in London, one of the oddest is the apparition, in the neighborhood of Newgate street, of a boy dressed in a monastic garb of the sixteenth century. It is raining, yet he is bareheaded, and he wears a long, flowing, dark-blue coat, like a monk's tunic, confined at the waist by a leather belt, which, with yellow breeches, shoes, and yellow stockings, complete his quaint costume. Who is he? Is he the ghost of some boy of the sixteenth century, or is he a living, flesh-and-blood urchin of the nineteenth century, arrayed in the garb of a bygone time? We need not be ashamed to confess our inability to solve this problem, for it is one which puzzled even so acute and ingenious a thinker as Sydney Smith. The witty Canon of St. Paul's brooded long over the origin of the Bluecoat Boy,—for it is by this name he is ycleped,—and finally hazarded the theory that he was a Quaker in the chrysalis state.

"Look at the circumstances," he urged, in a discussion with the Countess of Morley; "at a very early age, young Quakers disappear,—at a very early age the Coat Boys are seen; at the age of seventeen or eighteen young Quakers are again seen,—at the same age, the Coat Boys disappear; who has ever heard of a Coat Man? The thing is utterly unknown in natural history. That such a fact should have escaped our naturalists is truly astonishing. . . . Dissection would throw great light on the

question; and, if our friend —— would receive two boys into his house about the time of their changing their coats, great service would be rendered to the cause. I I have ascertained that the Bluecoat infants are fed with drab-colored pap, which looks very suspicious." To these daring speculations Lady Morley replied with reasonings equally shrewd and hard to answer. The possible correctness of Sydney's theory she admitted; but there was a grave difficulty: "The Bluecoat is an indigenous animal, —not so the Quaker. . . . I have seen and talked much with Sir R. Ker Porter on this interesting subject. He has traveled over the whole habitable globe, and has penetrated with a scientific and scrutinizing eye into regions unexplored by civilized man, and yet *he* has never seen a Quaker baby. He has lived for years in Philadelphia (the national nest of Quakers); he has roamed up and down Broadways, and lengthways in every nook and corner of Pennsylvania, and yet he never saw a Quaker baby; and what is new and most striking, never did he see a Quaker lady in a situation which gave hope that a Quaker baby might be seen hereafter. This is a stunning fact, and involves the question in such impenetrable mystery as will, I fear, defy even your sagacity, acuteness, and industry to elucidate."

How the question was settled,—whether Sydney continued to maintain that there never was such a thing as a Quaker baby, that "they are always born broad-brimmed and in full quake,"—we know not; and therefore, in lieu of other authority, we will accept the traditionary history of the Bluecoats. According to this, Christ's Hospital, or the Bluecoat School, was founded in 1553 by Edward VI, in his sixteenth year, just before his death.

The buildings were erected on the site of the monastery of the Gray Friars, of which a few arches, a part of a cloister, are all that remains; and the queer costume of the boys, which they intensely dislike, was adopted at the time. The flat caps supplied to them are so small that the boys rarely wear them, and go bareheaded. In 1672, Charles II founded the Mathematical School for forty boys, called "King's Boys," to which twelve more have been added; and they are distinguished by a badge on the shoulder. The school now has an income of £40,000 a year, and it feeds, clothes, and educates twelve hundred children, of whom five hundred, including the younger children and girls, are kept in a branch school at Hertford, for the sake of pure air.

It was through the kindness of Messrs. Trübner & Co., the celebrated publishers and booksellers, whose shop on Ludgate Hill, London, is within a stone's throw of Christ's Hospital, that we found an "Open Sesame" to the famous school. While indulging our bibliomaniac propensities there one day, we were so lucky as to be introduced to Dr. Brette, Professor of Modern Languages in the school, who kindly invited us to visit it the next day. Christ's Hospital! Where is the scholar or literary man whose pulse does not quicken at the mention of these words? What a crowd of pleasant memories they conjure up! Who, that has skimmed but the surface of modern English literature, has not read Charles Lamb's charming "Recollections" of that school? Christ's Hospital! where not only the loving *Carlagnulus*, as he was afterwards called, but Coleridge, "the inspired charity-boy," and Camden, and Leigh Hunt, and scores of other worthies, began their education,—how did our hearts leap up at the prospect of seeing the very benches

which they hacked, the very spots where they quailed under the eagle glance and thunder tones of Boyer! Accepting Dr. B.'s invitation, we next day proceeded to Newgate street, and, passing the gloomy prison, turned into a cross-street, where, about noon, we entered the boy-King's school. Entering a corridor, we notice on the wall numerous tablets placed there in honor of the graduates of the school who have become its benefactors. Not a few of England's "solid men" of business, who were educated here, have left handsome legacies to the institution. The buildings consist of several large structures of brick, fronting paved courts, which serve as playgrounds for the boys in sunny weather, while the corridors shield them from the rain in wet weather. Following the lead of Dr. Brette, we visit a school-room, where the hard seats and benches, with deep gashes testifying to the excellence of English cutlery, remind us of the pine planks upon which we tried our Rogers in the old red school-house of our boyhood. Was there ever a schoolboy who did not make his mark with his jack-knife, whatever his failures in recitation?

The eulogists of "modern improvements" will find but little to admire in these venerable piles, except the swimming-room,—the water of which is tempered at pleasure,—the admirable bathing-rooms, of which the boys are required to make use at prescribed times,—and the clean and airy hospital, where boys who are unwell, or who have met with an injury in their sports, are cared for by skillful surgeons and tender nurses. Visiting these apartments, we next glance at the dormitories, with their multitude of iron bedsteads and the monitor's room in the corner; and then return to the playground, where

memory is busy calling up the history of the Bluecoats whose names have been blazoned high on the scroll of fame. Can it be, we musingly ask ourselves, that the spider-legged, spectral-looking "Elia" once trod these courts, and trembled in yon rooms under the master's frown? Did Horne Tooke here begin the "*Diversions* of Purley," and Wesley shout in his boyish games as he never did afterwards in the Methodist class-room? Did the thoughtful Addison and the careless, impulsive Dicky Steele here kick the football, and little Barrow begin the pugilistic feats which he afterwards repeated with such effect in his struggle with an Algerine corsair? Was it here that the youthful Blackstone tested in boyish games the strength of the British Constitution; and was it from this school that Mitchell, the translator of "Aristophanes," was translated to Cambridge? All these names are on the muster-rolls of the Bluecoat School, and many others hardly less brilliant.

We think of these, and of the Bedlam cells to which naughty boys in Elia's time were consigned; little fellows of seven years shut up all night in these dungeons, where they could just lie at length upon straw and a blanket; with only a peep of light by day, let in from a prison-orifice at the top; and permitted to come forth only twice a week and then to be flogged by the beadle. We think of the fierce master, Boyer, and his two wigs,—the one serene, smiling, fresh-powdered, and betokening a mild day,—the other, an old, discolored, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. We see him shaking his knotty fist at a poor, trembling child, and crying, "*Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?*"—then flinging back into his lair, and after a few moments

bounding forth again, and singling out a lad with the exclamation, "Od's my life, sirrah, I have a great mind to whip you," which imperfect sense he speedily "pieces out," as if it had been some devil's litany, with the expletory yell, "and *I* WILL, *too*." We see the "gentle Elia" in another room, where the thunders rolled innocuous, listening to the *Ululantes*, and catching glimpses of Tartarus; we hear Coleridge, hardly yet in his teens, unfolding the mysteries of Plotinus, or reciting Homer or Pindar in his Greek, to the wonderment of the visitors. We think, too, of Coleridge's pious ejaculation when told that his old master was on his death-bed: "Poor J. B.! may all his faults be forgotten, and may he be wafted to bliss by little cherub boys all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities!"

We think of the poor scholar who conveyed to his room his fragments of coarse meat, which he was supposed to sell to beggars, for which he was excommunicated by the other boys as a *gag-eater*, until the kind steward found that he carried home the scraps, which he denied himself, to his starving parents. We think of the silver medal which the noble lad received for this from the Governor of the school; and then, perhaps, our thoughts revert to another boy, the petty Nero, afterwards seen a culprit in the hulks, who actually branded a boy who had offended him, with a red-hot iron,—and who nearly starved forty younger lads, by exacting from them daily one-half of their bread to pamper a young ass, which he had contrived to smuggle in, and keep upon the leads of the *ward*, as the dormitories were called, till the foolish beast, waxing fat, and kicking in the fulness of bread, betrayed him by braying. All these, and many other

recollections, comic or touching, are related by Lamb and Coleridge in their own inimitable style, but hardly seemed to us, when we were 4,000 miles away, as they do now, realities. It was here, too, that the following ludicrous scene occurred, narrated by some graduate, to omit which, in an account of this famous school, would be like blotting Moses' experience from the Vicar of Wakefield:

Among the scholars, when Lamb and Coleridge attended, was a poor clergyman's son, by the name of Simon Jennings. On account of his dismal and gloomy nature, his playmates had nicknamed him Pontius Pilate. One morning he went up to the master, Dr. Boyer, and said, in his usual whimpering manner, "Please, Dr. Boyer, the boys all call me Pontius Pilate." If there was one thing which old Boyer hated more than a false quantity in Greek and Latin, it was the practice of nicknaming. Rushing down among the scholars from his pedestal of state, with cane in hand, he cried, with his usual voice of thunder: "Listen, boys; the next time I hear any of you say 'Pontius Pilate,' I'll cane you as long as this cane will last. You are to say 'Simon Jennings,' not 'Pontius Pilate.' Remember that, if you value your hides." Having said this, Jupiter Tonans remounted Olympus, the clouds still hanging on his brow.

The next day, when the same class were reciting the Catechism, a boy of remarkably dull and literal turn of mind had to repeat the creed. He had got as far as "suffered under," and was about popping out the next word, when Boyer's prohibition unluckily flashed upon his obtuse mind. After a moment's hesitation he blurted out, "suffered under Simon Jennings, was cruci—." The rest of the word was never uttered, for Boyer had already

sprung like a tiger upon him, and the cane was descending upon his unfortunate shoulders like a Norwegian hail-storm or an Alpine avalanche. When the irate Doctor had discharged his cane-storm upon him, he cried: "What do you mean, you booby, by such blasphemy?" "I only did as you told me," replied the simple-minded Christ-Churchian. "Did as I told you?" roared old Boyer, now wound up to something above the boiling point. "What do you mean?" As he said this, he again instinctively grasped his cane more furiously. "Yes, Doctor, you said we were always to call 'Pontius Pilate' 'Simon Jennings.' Didn't he, Sam?" appealed the unfortunate culprit to Coleridge, who was next to him. Sam said nought; but old Boyer, who saw what a dunce he had to deal with, cried, "Boy, you are a fool. Where are your brains?" Poor Dr. Boyer for a second time was floored, for the scholar said, with an earnestness which proved its truth, but to the intense horror of the learned potentate, "In my stomach, sir." The Doctor ever afterwards respected that boy's stupidity, as though half afraid that a stray blow might be unpleasant.

But, whoop! our musings are interrupted by shouts, and away bounds a football, followed by an avalanche of boys, screaming, pushing, kicking, jostling, and tumbling headlong, very much like boys in America, and showing, by their earnestness, impetuosity, and energy, that they belong to the nineteenth century, and not to the sixteenth. But what a plague their long coats are, and how strange that the Governors do not see the grotesqueness and inconvenience of these old monkish costumes! To play their games the boys tuck up their coat-tails, and so, we suppose, will have to do for years

to come, till John Bull can see that modern garments may be substituted without impairing the stability of the British Constitution.

But, hark! a burst of martial music is heard; the boys have dropped the footballs, and, under the directions of a drill-master, are marshaled in platoons, each displaying its number on a flag. After a series of evolutions, they march, seven hundred strong, with a boy-band of thirty performers at their head, up the grand staircase to the Gothic hall, to dinner. This magnificent hall, which was completed in 1829, is 187 feet long, is lighted by large stained-glass windows, has an organ gallery at one end, and the walls are hung with portraits of the founder and benefactors of the institution. We take seats on a platform on the west side of the hall; a bell is touched, and a boy at the organ plays an anthem, while seven hundred children's voices mingle in the chant of thanksgiving. Another bell, and down sit the boys, off come the covers, and Bluecoats wait on Bluecoats, until all have quieted their barking stomachs with a plentiful supply of meat, potatoes, bread, and, above all, beer. The boys themselves clear the tables, and, after a few minutes' chat with them, we leave the hall, with many thanks to Dr. Brette for his courtesies, and a feeling that henceforth the writings of "Elia" and the "Highgate Sage" will have for us an added charm, if it is possible for us to hang with profounder interest over their bewitching pages. Meanwhile, if any of our readers care to see the famous old school as it has been for three centuries, they must cross the ocean soon, for these venerable piles are speedily to be swept away, to make room for the ruthless locomotives of the Mid-London Railway.

BOOK-BUYING.

READER, were you ever afflicted with that hopelessly-incurable disease, ycleped *bibliomania*,— that disease which sends its victim daily to Appleton's or Scribner's to empty his pocket-book freely in the purchase of rare and curious editions, or, perhaps, luxurious modern editions, of favorite old authors, flaunting in the bravery of large, clear type, with snow-white paper,— a rivulet of ink in a meadow of margin? Do you know what it is to be drawn to the book salesroom with an attraction like that of the steel to the magnet, and to find the tap of the auctioneer's hammer as irresistible as is the roll of the roulette-ball to the gambler, or the music of cork-drawing to the toper? Did you ever stand for hours wistfully turning over the pages of some coveted volume, vainly racking your brains for some art by which, with your limited funds, to make it your own? Did you ever feel your heart sink within you when, through your hesitation, or, more likely, the depletion of your purse, some ardently-coveted volume, on which you had fastened with longing eyes,— which, in imagination, you had already seen snugly stowed in a corner of your library,— passed by the inexorable law of the hammer to some luckier individual? Have you not deplored a thousand times the fatality that led you to haunt these marts of literature, and resolved, and re-resolved, and resolved again, never more to be seduced by the witchery of tree-calf, fine tool-

ing, or luxurious type and paper? And yet, if the book-buying disease had fairly seized on you, did you ever succeed in extirpating it, stern as might be the necessity for economy? If you got it under for a week, or possibly for a month, did you not invariably find, in the very ecstasy of your triumph, that it had temporarily abated only to break forth with tenfold fury?

If you have ever experienced the feelings we have described, we can sympathize with you. We have been a life-long victim of the disease, which early became chronic and incurable. Our ruin dated from the hour when we bought our first *duplicate*. This downward step, as John Hill Burton says, is fraught with fearful consequences; it is like the first secret dram swallowed in the forenoon, or the first pawning of the silver spoons; there is no hope for the patient after this: "It rends at once the veil of decorum spun out of the flimsy sophisms by which he has been deceiving his friends, and partially deceiving himself, into the belief that his previous purchases were necessary, or, at all events, serviceable for professional and literary purposes. He now becomes shameless and hardened; and it is observable, in the career of this class of unfortunates, that the first act of duplicity is immediately followed by an access of the disorder, and a reckless abandonment to its propensities."

Shall we ever forget the evenings passed in "lang syne" at Leonard's, in the American Athens,—at Bangs's, in Gotham,—or at Lord's, in the City of Brotherly Love, mobs, and firemen's fights, in watching the sale of those darlings in calf or turkey-morocco, on which we had set our affections? How, like many a lover by the side of flesh-and-blood mistresses, did we sigh for wealth for their

sake! The beauties! we would have embraced them all; but, alas! a terrible presentiment weighed upon our mind touching the number we should be able to secure in the awful conflict of the evening. The Duke of York, naming the select courtiers whom he wished to be saved from the wreck of the Gloucester frigate, leaving the rest to perish, was but a faint type of our gloomy self, deciding among scores of coveted volumes upon the few choicest and most fondly-prized ones, which we were most anxious to carry to the dry land of our own snug bookcase at home. Then how anxiously we weighed the chances,— how profoundly we estimated the probabilities,— of securing, or not securing, the favorites! Perhaps our capital was enough only to warrant the hope of winning one goodly-sized volume,— a fine old copy of Selden, Fuller, Burton, or Sir Thomas Browne; should we concentrate all our financial resources upon *that*, or should we divide our affections and our cash among two or three smaller volumes? Perhaps,— hateful thought! — the very book or books we yearned for might be eyed and coveted by some richer rival, who would outbid us. The work came early in the catalogue; there would be few present; it would go cheap. It was in the middle of the list,— the very noon of the sale; it would go dear. Oh! how we dreaded to see certain well-known faces peering through the crowd! Never have we had rivals whom we feared or hated more than rival book-buyers. Even when we neither saw nor heard any person who had fixed his affections on the book we longed for, there was sure to be some lynx-eyed Burnham, or other "Antique-Bokestore" man, who would fight to the last dollar, or, at least, make us pay dearly for the treasure if we won it. With what perfect malig-

nity did we regard these cruel, remorseless, but crafty, old fellows,— these tyrants,— who bid off the precious volumes, not from any love of them, but from the mean and sordid motive of making money!

There are some persons who have no sympathy with the inveterate book-buyer; who cannot appreciate the miser-like feeling which prompts a man to accumulate on his shelves hundreds of volumes which he can never read. There are those to whom the artificial refinements which have grown up about the outside of literature yield no pleasure,— to whom one of Pickering's gorgeous editions, or even one of Aldus himself, has no greater charms than the same work on flimsy paper and in shabby sheep. They read purely for information. A book to them is a storehouse of ideas and facts, or a mine to be quarried and worked, after which they care not what happens to it. The volumes they have read are to them shells without kernels, oranges that have been squeezed. They never acquire a love for a book, as a true smoker does for his pipe, apart from its uses. No pleasant associations or delicious memories cluster about their volumes, which the bare sight of them, after absence, conjures up. No pets or darlings of the heart have they; their souls never *warm* to a book. They cannot understand the feeling which prompted Charles Lamb to kiss a long-coveted old folio which he had found at a bookstall. The best book in the world, after they have sucked out all its marrow, is to these cold-blooded, matter-of-fact readers, nothing but printed paper between boards; just as, to some persons, the grandest old cathedral, with its fretwork and tracery, is only a pile of stone and mortar, and the music of Rubinstein only the regu-

lated tinkling of piano wires. There are persons who will walk down the finest nave in Christendom and see there no poem in stone, and there are those who can gaze on the superb alcoves of Trinity College library, Cambridge, without an emotion. Of such a man we may say, in the language of Wordsworth:

"A primrose by the river's brim
A yellow primrose is to him,
And it is nothing more."

There is another and a larger class of readers, who have a still lower esteem for books. These are the *helluones librorum*, the literary gluttons, who devour whole libraries, and prize books only as a means of amusement, or of killing time. Volumes of history, novels, travels, to these men are mere mile-posts to a swift and hurried traveller. When they close a work, they have the same hazy, confused recollection of its contents that a passenger in a "lightning-express" railway train has of the brooks, meadows, hills, dales, and other objects, by which he has been whirled. Each volume they race through acts as a sponge to wipe out the impressions made by its predecessors. Readers of this stamp have even less real love for books than the utilitarians first mentioned. They never say with Macaulay: "I have no pleasure from books which equals that of reading over for the hundredth time great productions which I know almost by heart." They never say of these silent teachers, with De Bury: "Hi sunt magistri qui nos instruunt sine vergis et ferula, sine verbis et colera, sine pane et pecunia"; nor will you ever catch them exclaiming, as did Theodore Beza to his loved volumes:

"Salvete, incolumes mei libelli,
Meae deliciae, meae salutes!"

With all such users of books, who are indifferent to their dress,—whether grim utilitarians, who prize only their thoughts, or pleasure-hunters who read to avoid thought,—we have no sympathy, yet no quarrel. With Horace, we bid them *stultos esse libenter*, and wish them, in the words of the Archbishop of Granada to Gil Blas, "all sorts of prosperity, with a little more taste." We envy not the disposition that leads a man to prize not the jewel more for its brilliant setting; that looks upon books over which the eye has hung from childhood as mere bricks in a wall, and that, without a pang or sigh, could replace them by others from the nearest shop. Almost every man has his hobby,—his pet taste,—which he loves, at whatever cost of time or money, to gratify. The hobby of one man is shells; another spends all his spare cash for pictures; a third doats on old coins; a fourth, on bugs and butterflies; and a fifth rides a musical hobby, and goes merrily through the world to the sound of fiddle, flute, French horn, and double bass. The hobby of another is books,—books old and new, in vellum and in calf, gilt-edged and marbled, with headbands and without,—with which, perhaps, he packs his cases, loads his what-nots, stuffs his drawers, and piles his floors, till his whole house becomes a library, a wilderness of books! He is a black-letter man, or a tall copyist, or an uncut man, or a rough-edged man, or an early-dramatist, or an Elzevirian, or a broadsider, or a pasquinader, or a tawny moroccoite, or a gilt-topper, or a marbled insider, or an *editio princeps* man, or any other of the innumerable species which the author of "The Book-Hunter" has defined. Who will say that this is not as innocent a hobby as any of the list?

It is true that the book-hunter,—the mere bibliomane

or bibliotaphe, as distinguished from the bibliophile, the true lover of books,— is often an utter stranger to the contents of the volumes he amasses;

> "Horace he has by many different hands,
> But not one Horace that he understands."

It was a genuine bibliomane who is reported to have said contemptuously of a well-known scholar, — "He know about books! Nothing, nothing at all, I assure you, unless, perhaps, about their *insides*." The value of a book, with this class, lies solely in its rarity, and they feel as did the English auctioneer, who, when the high bids at a book sale began to slacken, remonstrated pathetically: "Going so low as thirty shillings, gentlemen,— this curious book,— so low as thirty shillings, and *quite imperfect*." While we can pardon these enthusiasts, and even the bibliognostes, who are learned only in title-pages and editions, and presses, and places of issue, we entertain no such feeling toward the bibliotaphes, long-pursed wretches, who get possession of a unique copy and lock it up. "There were known," says Mr. Burton, in his admirable volume, "The Book-Hunter," "to be just two copies of a spare quarto, called 'Rout upon Rout, or the Rabblers Rabbled,' by Felix Nixon, Gent. A certain collector possessed one copy; the other, by indomitable perseverance, he also got hold of, and then his heart was glad within him; and he felt it glow with well-merited pride when an accomplished scholar, desiring to complete an epoch in literary history on which that book threw some light, besought the owner to allow him a sight of it, were it but for a few minutes, and the request was refused. 'I might as well ask him,' said the animal, who was rather proud of his firmness than ashamed of his churlishness.

'to make me a present of his brains and reputation.'" It is said the same fiendish spirit sometimes enters the mild bosom of the Dutch tulip fancier; and he has been known to pay thousands of dollars for a duplicate tuber, that he may have the satisfaction of crushing it beneath his heel. Dibdin warmed his convivial guests at a fire fed by the wood-cuts which had been printed from in the impression of the "Bibliographical Decameron," so that the subscribers to his costly volumes might not be troubled with the ghost of a doubt that poor men would ever participate in their privilege.

The prices which bibliomanes are sometimes reported as paying for their coveted treasures almost stagger belief. At the sale of Mr. Perkins's library, in London, in 1873, a "first folio" of Shakspeare sold for £585; Christine de Pisan's "Cent Histories de Troie," an "exquisite vellum manuscript full of miniatures," was knocked down for £650; and a fine manuscript copy of John Lydgate's "Siege of Troy," for £1,620! But the most "fabulous" price was that paid on the last day of the sale for a vellum copy of the famous Gutenberg and Fust Bible, of which only eight other copies are known to exist. For this precious book,—"the most important and distinguished work in the annals of typography,"—the first edition of the Holy Scriptures,—the first book printed with movable metal types by the inventors of the art of printing,—the enormous sum of £3,400 was paid! Seventeen thousand dollars for a single book!—enough money to buy a large private library. This surpasses the sale, made immortal by Dibdin, of the copy of Boccaccio published by Valdarfer, at Venice, in 1471. The sale of the Duke of Roxburgh's library, to which it belonged,

took place in May, 1812, and lasted forty-two days. Among the distinguished company who attended the sale were the Duke of Devonshire, Earl Spencer, and the Duke of Marlborough, then Marquis of Blandford. The bid stood at five hundred guineas. "A thousand guineas," said Earl Spencer. "And ten," added the Marquis. You might have heard a pin drop. All eyes were turned,— all breathing well nigh stopped,— every sword was put home within its scabbard, except that which each of these champions brandished in his valorous hand. "Two thousand pounds," said the Marquis. The Earl Spencer bethought him like a prudent general of useless bloodshed and waste of powder, and had paused a quarter of a minute, when Lord Althorp with long steps came to his side, as if to bring his father a fresh lance to renew the fight. Father and son whispered together, and Earl Spencer exclaimed, "Two thousand two hundred and fifty pounds!" An electric shock went through the assembly. "And ten," quietly added the Marquis. This ended the strife. Mr. Evans, ere he let the hammer fall, paused; the ebony instrument seemed to be charmed or suspended "in mid air"; the spectators stood aghast when the hammer fell, and the echo of its fall sounded on the farthest shores of Italy. The tap of that hammer was heard in the libraries of Rome, Milan, and Venice. Boccaccio started in his sleep of five hundred years, and M. Van Praet groped in vain amidst the royal alcoves in Paris, to detect a copy of the famed Valdarfer Boccaccio.*

The most discouraging feature of the mania for book-collecting is, that it grows by what it feeds on, and becomes the more insatiable the more it is gratified. It is

* Dibdin's "Bibliographical Decameron."

hard for ordinary book-lovers to comprehend a desire for books so devouring as that which consumed Richard Heber. The number of his books was stated in six figures, and the catalogue of them filled five thick octavo volumes. He built a library at his house in Hodnet, which was said to be full. His residence at Pimlico, London, was filled, like Magliabecchi's at Florence, with books from the top to the bottom,— every chair, table, and passage containing piles of erudition. He had another house in York street, laden from the ground floor to the garret with curious books. He had a library in High street, Oxford; an immense library in Paris; another at Antwerp; another at Brussels; another at Ghent; and yet others at other places in the Low Countries and in Germany. When any one raised a *cui bono* query of wonder at this, his answer was ready: "Why, sir, you see no man can comfortably do without three copies of a book. One he must have for a show-copy, and he will probably keep it at his country-house; another he will require for his own use and reference; and, unless he is inclined to part with this, which is very inconvenient, or risk the injury of his best copy, he must needs have a third at the service of his friends."

It is said that, some years ago, a book-hunting Archdeacon in England, going up to London to be examined on some question before the House of Commons, suddenly disappeared, with all his money in his pocket, and his friends, with many misgivings of foul play, wondered what had become of him. Suddenly he returned home one day, penniless, followed by a wagon containing three hundred and seventy-two copies of rare editions of the Bible. Who will judge harshly of a case like this? How

glaring the contrast between the victim of such a mania and the *de grege Epicuri porcus*, who squanders his money upon the luxuries of the table, or him who wastes it upon ostentatious upholstery,—upon wall-papers that cost $3 a roll, or carpets that cost $5 a yard!

But is there no cure for the disease? None that we have heard of, except downright "impecuniosity." It is, indeed, hydra-headed; extirpate one of its manifestations, and it crops out in fifty new forms and ways. Generally it rages more and more fiercely in the patient, until he has gathered together more books, and "things in books' clothing," as Lamb calls them, than he can find convenient room for; or, if he has wisely collected on some single branch of literature or science, he finds, sooner or later, an impenetrable barrier to the progress of his hobby, with whatever spirit he may spur its stuffed sides. He opens his eyes some day to the fact that, although one book, and yet another, and another, fill but little space, yet an aggregate of volumes may clamor as loudly for more room as an aggregate of more vulgar wares, and that heaps of books never read nor consulted may be as much in the way as heaps of other lumber. If he lives in a hired house, this fact is more deeply impressed on his mind by a migratory May-day; soon after which, if he can screw up his courage to the sticking-point, he ransacks his hecatombs of musty old tomes, prunes out those which are dear to him as "the ruddy drops that visit his sad heart," and packs off the rest to an auction room, to be fought for by a fresh horde of enthusiastic bibliomaniacs.

A PINCH OF SNUFF.

"Scent to match thy rich perfume,
Chymic art did ne'er presume.
Through her quaint alembic strain,
None so sovereign to the brain."

SO sings the quaint, dear, gentle Elia, in his chaunt to the Virginia weed; and a passionate lover of it he was, in all its witching forms of pigtail, roll, and titillating dust. How ardent was his devotion to the plant, is well known to all who have read his "Farewell to Tobacco," in which, after ironically abusing it with all sorts of hard names, he abruptly turns traitor (a good traitor) to the side he had espoused, and, archly declaring his hatred was but feigned, concludes by asserting his resolve still to retain

"— a seat 'mong the joys
Of the bless'd tobacco boys,"

where, though he may be debarred by sour physician the full luxury of the plant, he yet

"— may catch
Some collateral sweets, and snatch
Sidelong odours, that give life
Like *glances from a neighbor's wife.*"

The struggle which Lamb has so vividly depicted, between his love for tobacco and his acquiescence in the necessity which severed him from it, is one through which millions of human beings have passed; and, almost invariably, with the same result. Who, that ever fell under

the sorcery of the weed, has not again and again resolved to escape from its spell,—racking the vocabulary for epithets with which to curse it, and yet again and again yielding to the siren, affirming

> "'Twas but in a sort I blamed thee,
> None e'er prospered who defamed thee."

If logic and learning, satire and eloquence, could "kill off" a plant, tobacco would ages ago have ceased to be chewed, smoked, or snuffed. Alphonse Karr declares that, had it been a *useful* plant, it could never have survived the assaults made upon it. Had any statesman, he adds, before tobacco was discovered, proposed, for the purposes of revenue, to introduce so nauseous and poisonous an article among the people; had he declared it his intention to offer it for sale, chopped up into pieces, or reduced to powder, telling them that the consequences of chewing, snuffing, or smoking it would be only heart-pains, stomach-pains, vertigoes, cholics, convulsions, vomitings of blood, etc.,—that's all; the project would have been ridiculed as absurd. "My good friend," would have been the reply of every sane listener to the scheme, "nobody will dispute with you the privilege of selling a thing of which there will be no buyers. You would have a far better chance of success, should you open a shop and write over it

KICKS ARE SOLD HERE!

or

HORSEWHIPPINGS SOLD HERE,
WHOLESALE AND RETAIL."

And yet the speculation has succeeded, and tobacco and its praises are in almost every man's mouth. Kings have forbidden it; popes have anathematized it; physicians have warned against it; and even clergymen have thundered

their denunciations of it from the pulpit; but in spite of declamations, and "counterblasts," and sarcasms, it continues to be rooted in the affections of its votaries, who greet it with the cry —

> "Hail, sole cosmopolite, Tobacco, hail!
> Shag, long-cut, short-cut, pigtail, quid, or roll,
> Dark Negrohead, or Orinooka pale,
> In every form congenial to the soul."

Gentle reader, we are no slave of the weed; but, should we ever become one, as in our weakness we may, we shall have a decided choice as to the form of our servitude, and shall incline to the powdered article as the least objectionable to our senses. Chant as you may the praises of chewing and smoking, they are but wretched ways of extracting the juices of the plant, and, if for no other reason, would be without a charm to us, by the vulgar commonness to which they are degraded. Inconvenient and laborious, they are at the same time uncleanly, offensive to one (and that the better) half of humanity, and, it is hardly too much to say, that no man who is addicted to them can *expect-to-rate* as a gentleman.

But snuff-taking is not only a more delicate and refined operation *per se*, but the number and character of those engaged in it show it to be at once a dignified and an aristocratic practice. It requires a certain fineness and delicacy of perception to apprehend the virtues of fine Spanish; and hence the vulgar part of the community, whose senses take cognizance of the coarser scents and substances,— who dine off the most strongly-flavored dishes, and, when they drink, want their wine brandied, every glass a headache,— almost universally "turn up their noses" at the pleasures of the box. Add to this, that

snuff-takers are, almost entirely, a serious, reflecting race; no men know better than they that things are not always what they seem at first blush, and that it is dangerous to approach to an examination of them bluntly and with uncleared optics. A snuff-taker, before he looks into any grave question, is careful to take his pinch; and then, as Leigh Hunt observes, if any fallacy comes before him, he shakes the imposture, like the remnant of the pinch, to atoms, with one "flesh-quake" of head, thumb, and indifference. Or should he "look into some little nicety of question or of creation,—of the intellectual or the visible world,—he, having sharpened his eyesight with another pinch, and put his head into proper *cephalick* condition, discerns it, as it were, microscopically, and pronounces that there is 'more in it than the *un-snuff-taking* would suppose.'" Hence, doubtless, it is, that the phrase "up to snuff" is a synonym for keenness and quickness of intellectual vision.

But it is not merely on philosophical grounds that we prefer this form of using tobacco. It has authority in its favor. If we turn over the pages of modern biography, we shall find hardly a man whose name has been emblazoned high on fame's scroll, that was not a votary of snuff. Talleyrand used to declare that diplomacy was impossible without it. It was indispensable, he argued, to politicians, as it gives them time for thought in answering awkward questions while pretending only to indulge in a pinch. Among his snuff-boxes was one which was double, being two snuff-boxes joined together by a common bottom. The one was politely offered to his acquaintance; the other, never to be profaned by the finger and thumb of a second person, was reserved for himself,—a

precaution in which we recognize the arch-diplomate, who was so eternally on his guard, that, when a lady requested his autograph, he wrote his name on the very top of the sheet of paper handed to him. Pope tells us, in his "Key to the Lock," that the Prince Eugene was a great taker of snuff as well as of towns. Frederic the Great had a collection of 1,500 snuff-boxes, and he loved the dust so well that he had capacious pockets made to his waistcoat, to get at it readily. "Glorious John Dryden" was a liberal patron of snuff, and in his later years, was peculiarly fastidious in the article, abhorring all ordinary snuffs, and satisfied only with a mixture which he himself prepared. When from his chair in Will's Coffee House he issued those literary decrees which ruled the judgment of the town, he was never without the stimulant; and for a young author, on visiting Will's, to receive a pinch from Dryden's snuff-box, was equivalent to a formal admission into the society of wits. It has been said that you might as soon divorce the idea of the Popes, Steeles, and Voltaires, from their wigs and caps, as from their snuff-boxes.

Beau Brummell, who so long was the glass of fashion, had a gorgeous collection of snuff-boxes, and was distinguished for the grace with which he opened the lid of his box, with the thumb of the hand that carried it, while he delicately took his pinch with two fingers of the other. His claim to be the leader of the *beau monde* was based not more on his walk, his coat, and his cravat, than on the inimitable and *distingué* manner with which,—snatching "a grace beyond the reach of art,"—he indulged in the "nasal pastime," as his biographer terms it, of taking snuff. The great literary leviathan,

Dr. Johnson, was fond of the delicious dust; and so lavish was he in the use of it, that he was wont to take it from a waistcoat pocket, instead of from a box. The gloom of his life might have deepened into a profounder melancholy, had he not cheated its *ennui* by frequent pinches of snuff, as well as draughts from the tea-kettle that was "never dry." Sir Joshua Reynolds had a keen zest for this stimulant, and we know not how much the exquisite beauty of his pictures may be owing to the clearness which it gave to his brain and his optics. When bored with talk about "Raphael, Correggio, and stuff," by canting ignoramuses whose shallowness his old-fashioned politeness would not allow him to ridicule, he found a ready resource in his box:

"He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff."

Scott, though he may not have carried it with him, was yet fond of an occasional pinch; and Cowper, as all know, rescued an hour from melancholy to hymn the praises of his favorite weed. It is recorded of the elegant historian, Gibbon, that, when about to say a good thing, he was wont to announce it by a complacent tap on his snuff-box. In the silhouette, the profile cut out with scissors, which faces the title-page of his "Memoirs," he is represented as indulging his habit, and looking, as Colman says,

"Like an erect black tadpole, taking snuff."

Narrating his journey to Turin, and his presentation at Court there at the age of twenty-seven, the historian says: "The most sociable women I have met with are the King's daughters. I chatted for about a quarter of an hour with them, talked about Lausanne, and grew so

very free and easy that I drew my snuff-box, rapped it, took snuff twice (a crime never known before in the presence chamber), and continued my discourse in my usual attitude of my body bent forward and my forefinger stretched out." Napoleon was a famous snuff-taker, and, on the eve of battle, always stimulated his thinking powers by extra quantities of the pulverized weed. Canning attributed to it half his own victories: "Would you confute your opponent in argument?" said he; "learn to take snuff, and turn your back!"—a style of reproof which we have seen most felicitously practised. Henry Clay loved a good pinch; and during one of his fiercest encounters with Calhoun, which we witnessed some years ago, in the United States Senate, when the two giants measured swords with each other some half-dozen times, we noticed that he uniformly, each time he advanced to the onset, roused and stimulated himself to the height of his great argument by drawing on the snuff-box of the nearest Senator.

It is said that some one who was a little skeptical about Tom Moore's originality, once asked him whence he had derived a particularly brilliant sentiment in one of his songs. "Why, I got it," replied the poet, at the same moment priming his nose with a stiff pinch, "I got it where I got all the rest, to be sure, *at Lundy Foot's shop.*" The poet Crabbe was an ardent votary of snuff; and, doubtless, we owe many a fine domestic picture to the stimulus of a pinch. We are told that Dr. Parr, too, —that famous incarnation of Greek and Latin,—fond as he was of smoking (consuming forty pipes a day, according to some authorities), was not niggard in the use of snuff. We have already spoken of Charles Lamb: it is

said that if a person took snuff heartily, that alone was enough to commend him to Lamb's acquaintance. He would understand, by analogy, the pungency of other things besides Irish blackguard or Scotch rappee. A modern essayist, who passed "a day of happy hours" alone with Lamb at Islington, speaks of his wild wayward words of wonder as to the sort of snuff he would meet with in the Elysium,—and the faint stutterings of joy with which he anticipated offering to old Burton a fine pinch of Spanish, as pungent as his own wit. Doubtless he never would have written his "Farewell to Tobacco," had he used it only in the powdered form, instead of learning to puff the coarser weed "by toiling after it as some men toil after virtue." Sydney Smith, describing the French *savant*, says it is curious to see in what little apartments he lives; "you find him at his books, *covered with snuff*, with a little dog that bites your legs." Butler has noted that the saints of Cromwell's time were not averse to snuff. He says of one:

> "He had administered a dose
> Of snuff mundungus to his nose;
> And powdered the inside of his skull
> Instead of the outward jobbernole."

In short, few great or good men have lived since the introduction of the weed, who have not consumed it in this form; and to have deprived them of the excitement which their snuff-boxes afforded would have been, there is reason to believe, not only to lessen their happiness and sour their tempers, but to rob them in a great degree of their powers of reflection.

Again, the snuff-box is a powerful auxiliary to social intercourse and enjoyment. By what subtle, mysterious influence it operates, we know not; but who has not no-

ticed the almost miraculous effect of a little Maccaboy in "breaking the ice" and banishing the freezing formalities of a mixed company, when gracefully tendered by one of their number? Who has not observed also what a bond of union, what an isthmus of communication, the snuff-box is among travelers, even foreigners who know not each other's language; how quickly the heart opens to the open box of a true gentleman, of whatever country he be, or however humble his station? The snuff-box has been a powerful engine even in Presidential elections, and it is hardly an exaggeration to say that to it some of our Chief Magistrates have owed their elevation to office. When Madison was candidate for that dignity, and was assailed with the utmost vehemence of party rage, the polite attentions of Mrs. Madison to the chiefs of all parties, who met in social intercourse at her house, did wonders towards softening the asperities of party spirit at the Capital, and electing her husband to the Presidency. Her snuff-box, in particular, had a magic influence, and its titillating dust seemed as perfect a security from hostility as is a participation of bread-and-salt among some savage tribes. The kindly feelings thus cultivated among those who sneezed together, triumphed, we are told, over the animosity of party spirit, and won for her husband a popularity to which his lofty reserve and chilling manners would have been an insuperable obstacle. The handful of dust with which Virgil ends the wars of the bees, but typified the magic power of her snuff-box:

> "Hi motus animorum, atque hæc certamina tanta
> Pulvis exigui jactu compressa quiescunt."

That there is some instinct of our nature which

prompts the use of this stimulus is proved by the fact that even anti-tobacconists, who declaim against the weed, are guilty,— unconsciously to themselves,— of the exquisite inconsistency of using it in its powdered form. How often have we listened to a vehement tirade against tobacco, while ever and anon the orator would pull out a silver snuff-box, and sandwich between his sentences a most sternutatory pinch! In the reign of Louis XIV, Fragon, the physician of the grand monarch, having to maintain a thesis against snuff in the schools, was taken ill; whereon his place was supplied by a brother medicus, who read the thesis,— taking all the while enormous quantities of snuff! So true is the remark of Horace, that you may pitchfork Nature out of your presence, but

"— usque recurret,
Et mala perrumpet furtim fastidia victrix."

Few things are more interesting than to notice the different ways in which men take snuff. A thorough and critical knowledge of these would, no doubt, add largely to our acquaintance with psychology, and perhaps give us a profounder insight into men's characters,— their secret thoughts and hidden motives of action,— than physiognomy or phrenology. On this head, Leigh Hunt observes, with his usual felicity, that "some men take snuff by little fits and starts, and get over the thing quickly. These are epigrammatic snuff-takers, who come to the point as fast as possible, and to whom pungency is everything. They generally use a sharp and severe snuff,— a sort of essence of pins' points. Others are all urbanity and polished demeanor; they value the style as much as the sensation, and offer the box around them as much out of dignity as benevolence. Some take snuff

irritably, others bashfully, others in a manner as dry as the snuff itself, generally with an economy of the vegetable; others with a luxuriance of gesture, and a lavishness of supply, that announces a moister article, and sheds its superfluous honors over neckcloth and coat. Dr. Johnson's was probably a snuff of this kind." About a century ago a fashion prevailed among snuff-takers of administering the powder to the nose with a little spoon or ladle, in allusion to which Samuel Wesley expressed a fear that the human ear would not long remain exempt from its application:

> "To such a height with some is fashion grown,
> They feed their very nostrils with a spoon;
> One, and but one degree, is wanting yet
> To make their senseless luxury complete;
> Some choice regale, useless as snuff and dear,
> To feed the mazy windings of the ear."

But to leave these references to authority, and glance at some additional advantages of snuff-taking:—what pleasure is there, we ask, comparable to the luxury of a sneeze? We love a good laugh, it is true, and agree with Charles Lamb that it is worth a hundred groans in any state of the market. Its delicious alchemy can convert even tears into the quintessence of merriment, and make wrinkles themselves expressive of youth and frolic. But who will pretend that it sends such an electric thrill through the frame as a sudden sternutation? The former may convulse by degrees; but it is the last only which can instantly electrify the nerves, brighten every sense, clear away the cobwebs from the brain, and give the whole system a shock to which the effect of the voltaic pile is as nothing. Who, that has ever experienced the titillating sensation,—at least, when produced artificially,

— can forget the ecstatic feelings that accompanied and followed the paroxysm? Truly has it been said that "one seems to himself suddenly to be endowed with a sixth sense," opening to him a world of wonders, and teaching him to contemplate the possession of a thousand delicate nerves before unthought of. Hardly are the series of sneezes over, 'ere the slight premonitory tickling at the nose is felt again, and he tries, by various persuasive arts, to coax forth another; he draws his breath through his nostrils,— he moves his head to and fro with an *ish-i*,— he thinks intensely of his last sneeze,— when suddenly the titillation begins again, and away he goes, — sn-sn-sneeze!

> "Sudden with starting tears each eye o'erflows,
> And the high dome re-echoes to the nose!"

According to a late writer the following is the scientific explanation of a sneeze: — The nose receives three sets of nerves,— the nerves of smell, those of feeling, and those of motion. The first communicate to the brain the odorous properties of substances with which they may come in contact, in a diffused or concentrated state; the second communicate the impressions of touch; the third move the muscles of the nose; but the power of these muscles is very limited. When a sneeze occurs all these faculties are excited to a high degree. A grain of snuff excites the olfactory nerves, which dispatch to the brain the intelligence that "snuff has attacked the nostril." The brain instantly sends a mandate through the motor nerves to the muscles, saying, "Cast it out!" and the result is unmistakable. So offensive is the enemy besieging the nostril held to be, that the nose is not left to its own defense. It would be too feeble to accomplish this.

An allied army of muscles join in the rescue,—nearly one-half the body arouses against the intruder,—from the muscles of the lips to those of the abdomen, all unite in the effort for the expulsion of the grain of snuff.

A modern poet, who, though he would doubtless object to having his nose pulled, yet holds it ever ready for a pinch, has the following picturesque description of a sneeze:

"What a moment! What a doubt!—
All my nose, inside and out,
All my thrilling, tickling, caustic
Pyramid rhinocerostic
Wants to sneeze, and cannot do it!
  Now it yearns me, thrills me, stings me,
  Now with rapturous torment wrings me;
Now says 'Sneeze, you fool, get through it.'
What shall help me?—Oh! Good Heaven!
Ah—yes, thank ye—Thirty-seven—
Shee—shee—Oh, 'tis most del-*ishi*
Ishi—ishi—most del-*ishi*
(Hang it! I shall sneeze till spring)
Snuff's a most delicious thing."

Who can conceive of a more innocent luxury than this? What language, then, can paint the cruelty of the cynic who would rob men of this enjoyment?—as did Amurath IV, who, in 1625, forbade his subjects the use of snuff under the penalty of having the nose cut off; and the Grand Duke of Moscow, by whom the Muscovite who was found snuffing was condemned to have his nostrils split. Pope Urban VIII and Innocent XII were comparatively excusable when they anathematized all snuff-takers who committed the heinous sin of taking a pinch in church; nor will any devotee of the dust execrate the memory of "Good Queen Bess," because she added to the penalty of excommunication in such cases by authorizing the parish beadle to confiscate the snuff-box to his own

use. These were harsh penalties for so trivial an offense; but there is a time and place for all things; and abstinence from Maccaboy during the hours of church service, so far from robbing its lover of any pleasure on the whole, would only give a finer edge to his subsequent enjoyment. But to subject men to the death-penalty for the use of snuff,—to bore a hole through their noses, as did Mahomet IV,—to compel the offenders, as once did the Shah of Persia, to expatriate themselves in order to enjoy this "virtuous vice,"—does it not seem a stretch of tyranny too violent for belief? And how paltry and picayunish appear the calculations of such minute philosophers as Lord Stanhope, who estimated that, in forty years of a snuff-taker's life, two entire years would be spent in tickling his nose, and two more in blowing it, and concluded that a proper application of the time and money thus lost to the public might constitute a fund for the discharge of England's national debt! Out upon such utilitarian suggestions, worthy of the mean "age of calculators and economists!" Hearken unto Boswell, as he sings in his "Shrubs of Parnassus":

> "O snuff! our fashionable end and aim,
> Strasburgh, Rappee, Dutch, Scotch, whate'er thy name;
> Powder celestial! quintessence divine!
> New joys entrance my soul, while thou art mine.
> By thee assisted, ladies kill the day,
> And breathe their scandal freely o'er their tea;
> Not less they prize thy virtues when in bed;
> One pinch of thee revives the vapored head,
> Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
> Glows in the stars, and tickles in the sneeze."

Apropos to sneezing, it is a question which has long tormented the wits of antiquaries, whence came the custom of saying "God bless you!" to one who sneezes. Many

writers ascribe it to an ordinance of Pope St. Gregory, at whose time the air was so pestilential that they who sneezed instantly expired. On this the pontiff, it is said, instituted a short benediction to be pronounced on such persons, to save them from the fatal effects of this malignancy. The Rabbins, however, declare that before Jacob men sneezed but once in a lifetime, and then immediately died; and that the memory of this was ordered to be preserved in all nations, by a command of every prince to his subjects to employ some salutary exclamation after the act of sternutation. Whatever the origin of the custom, it has prevailed among all nations, and was found to exist even in the New World, on its first discovery by the Spaniards. Among the ancients, the distinctions made about sneezing raised it to an art; for while it was unlucky in the afternoon, or when men were clearing away food, or if it occurred three times, or more than four, or on the left-hand side,— if it occurred among persons in deliberation, or two or four times, or in the morning, or on the right-hand side, it was accounted a lucky omen. We are told that Themistocles, by a judicious sneeze on his right-hand side, persuaded his soldiers to fight, and Xenophon, by a similar act in the middle of a speech, was elected General. On another occasion, a sneeze from a linesman just before a battle was considered so ominous that public prayers were deemed necessary in consequence.

An old writer says that the ancients were accustomed to go to bed again, if they sneezed while putting on their shoes. Catullus, in one of his charming poems, makes Cupid sneeze his approbation of two lovers. When the King of Mesopotamia sneezes, he is greeted with shouts in the ante-chamber, shouts in the palace-yard, and

shouts in the city streets, echoed and reverberated by a thousand loyal voices. Supposing his majesty to be an inveterate snuff-taker, what horrid cries must rend the air of his capital "from morn till dewy eve"! According to mythology, the first sign of life given by Prometheus's artificial man was a sneeze, caused by the solar rays stealing through his pores. The Siamese wish long life to persons sneezing. The reason, according to Brande, is, they believe that when one of the judges of hell opens the register in which the duration of men's lives is written, and looks upon any particular leaf, all those whose names chance to be entered on it never fail to sneeze immediately. In Vienna, if one sneezes in a *café*, the bystanders will doff their hats, and say "God be with you!" The lower class of modern Romans greet a sneezer with the salutation, "May you have male children!" Milton says that earthquakes,

> "— though mortals fear them
> As dangerous to the pillared frame of heaven,
> Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
> Are to the main as inconsiderable
> And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
> To man's less universe, and soon are gone."

Perhaps the most terrific sneeze on record is that described by Martelli, an Italian writer, in his *Bambociata, or Sneezing of Hercules*, a marionette farce, from which Swift borrowed the idea of his Voyage to Laputa. In this piece Hercules is represented as reaching the land of the Pigmies, who, alarmed at the sight of what seems a living mountain, hide themselves in caves. One day, as Hercules is sleeping in the open fields, the Pigmies venture forth from their hiding places, and, armed with boughs and thorns, mount the sleeping monster, and

cover him from head to foot like flies covering a piece of raw meat. Hercules awakes, and, feeling something tickling his nose, sneezes. His enemies are routed, "horse, foot, and dragoons," and tumble precipitately from his sides,—when the curtain falls, and the piece ends.

A powerful argument for snuff-taking in preference to other modes of using the weed, is, that one does not have to serve a long and disagreeable apprenticeship before he acquires a full mastery of the art and revels in the highest pleasures of snuffing. Unlike the tobacco-chewer or other consumer of the weed, who has to struggle heroically through its repugnant qualities of taste and effect, until by habit its stimulus grows pleasurable and the system gets mithridated against the poison, the snuff-taker, at the very threshold of his career, is placed on a level with the most veteran practitioners of the art. Another argument for this form of the weed is, that the snuff-taker is rarely guilty of such outrageous excesses in its use as are habitual with the chewer and the smoker. The lover of the pipe and the cigar puffs out his volumes of smoke from dawn till bed-time,—

> "Faucibus ingentem fumum, mirabile dictu,
> Evomit involvitque domum caligine cæcâ";

the devotee of raw cavendish "chews the cud of sweet and bitter fancy" from the moment he wakes in the morning till he drops to sleep at night; and some wretches, not satisfied with this, resort to what is called "plugging,"—that is, thrusting long pellets or rolls of tobacco up the nose, and keeping them there during the entire night. Sir Walter Raleigh, who first made smoking fashionable in England, was a type of the whole tribe of smokers. Though an elegant courtier, he smoked

to the disgust of the ladies at court, smoked as he sat to see his friend Essex perish on the scaffold, and smoked just before he went to the scaffold himself. Robert Hall used to smoke till the last moment before ascending the pulpit, and resumed his pipe as soon as he came down. When a friend sought to convince him that tobacco was sapping his health, he replied: "I can't answer your arguments, and I can't give up my pipe."

That snuff-taking may be, and is, abused,—that, like all other innocent enjoyments, it may be carried to such excess as to undermine the health, and even cause death, —is true; and it is upon this abuse that all the arguments against it are founded. The nose is the emunctory of the brain, and when its functions are impeded, the whole system of the head is deranged. One of the effects of excessive snuffing is to deaden the nerves of the nose, which are endowed with exquisite sensibility, and traverse with their fine net-work the entire inner membrane of the nostril. Drying up the secretion which lubricates this membrane, it gradually destroys the sense of smell, and the result is, that of all the pleasures derived from the olfactory organs,—the *omnis copia narium*, as Horace terms it,—the snuff-taker knows as little as if he were noseless. Similar effects ensue upon the saliva, and the sense of taste is blunted. An inveterate snuff-taker may always be recognized by his brown, sodden complexion,— by a certain nasal twang or asthmatic wheezing when he tries to speak,—and by a sort of disagreeable noise in respiration, which resembles incipient snoring. Snuff, intemperately taken, is a deadly foe to the memory. The Abbé Moigno, an eminent French savant, who in 1861 took twenty grammes a day, found this faculty

rapidly decaying in consequence of the habit. He had learned some fifteen hundred root-words in each of several languages, but found these gradually dropping out of his mind, so as to necessitate frequent recurrence to dictionaries. Quitting the use of tobacco in all its forms, he found, after six years of abstinence, that his memory had recovered all its riches, all its sensibility. The army of words, which had run away, had all gradually returned. Snuff, taken in enormous quantities, also causes fleshy excrescences in the nose, tumors and polypi in the throat, vomitings, loss of appetite, dyspepsia,—is a frequent cause of blindness, and is said to induce convulsions, promote consumption, and even to cause madness and death. Napoleon's death is attributed to a morbid state of the stomach, superinduced by excessive snuffing; and Dr. Rush tells us that Sir John Pringle, who was afflicted with tremors in his hands and an impaired memory, through the use of snuff, recovered his recollection and the use of his hands by abandoning the dust at the suggestion of Dr. Franklin. As if this catalogue of ills to which the snuff-taker is liable were not fearful enough, other imaginary ones have been added; and grave doctors have gone so far as to declare that his brain will be found after death to be dried to a sort of dirty membrane, clogged with soot!

These facts, however, are not solid objections to snuff itself; they only show that it may be taken in excess, or may not be suited to one's peculiar idiosyncrasies of constitution or temperament. Would you chop off men's fingers, because they are sometimes pickers and stealers? Or is the fact that some men make gluttons of themselves an argument for the abolition of eating? No one abstains

from veal pie because a greedy fool once died of eating a whole calf; and the excellence of sherry at dinner is not disputed because unlimited Old Bourbon induces delirium tremens. There are men so strangely constituted that they cannot digest even lamb or mutton, and whom the bare sight or smell of certain healthful articles of food throws into spasms. The Duke d'Epernon fainted at the sight of a leveret; and Marshal de Breze, who died in 1689, swooned at the sight of a rabbit. Erasmus could not smell fish without being thrown into a fever, and Scaliger shuddered in every limb on seeing water-cresses. Favoriti, a famous Italian poet, could not bear the odor of a rose.

The gravest objection to snuff is the adulterations to which it is subjected. When adulterated, as it too often is, with pepper, hellebore, and pulverized glass, to give it additional pungency, its effects must be anything but beneficial. Add to these the ferruginous earths, such as red and yellow ochre, and no less than three poisonous preparations, viz.: chromate of lead, red lead, and bi-chromate of potash,—which, according to the London "Lancet" Commission, are introduced into it,—and its deleterious effects are frightfully aggravated. At a meeting of the Philosophical Society of Manchester, England, Dr. C. Calvert stated that he had recently analyzed several samples of snuff, in all of which he had found traces of red lead, and of the bi-chromate of potash, which is still more frequently employed. M. Duchâtel, of Paris, found that a dose from one twenty-fifth to one five-hundredth of a grain sufficed to destroy a dog. Colic, "dropped hands," and other forms of paralysis, are among the least effects of this deadly poison. Statements like this are not to be

sneezed at; but, added to the fact that it is the scented snuffs that are most unwholesome, as they hide the adulteration, and that it is not unusual to save the sweepings of tobacco-shops and warehouses, even the bits of leaf that adhere to the shoes, for the purpose of mixing in snuff,—must make even the most hardened and incorrigible snuffer pause ere he again converts his nose into a dust-hole and a soot-bag.

Considering how the practice of snuff-taking tends to spoil the complexion, it seems strange that ladies should ever become addicted to it. The fact that, by the drain of the juices, it tends to injure the muscles of the face, to furrow and corrugate the skin, and to give a gaunt, withered, and jaundiced appearance to "the human face divine," would be enough, one would think,—saying nothing of damage to the health,—to deter any woman from touching the "high-dried pulvillio." Yet in the days of Queen Anne and Louis XV, as we have already hinted, the practice was fashionable, not only with old ladies, who still cling to it, but with those who had their conquests yet to make, and whom time had not begun to rob of their charms. Leigh Hunt remarks that the ladies in the time of the Voltaires and the Du Chatelets seemed never to think themselves either too old to love, or too young to take snuff. A bridegroom in one of the British essayists, describing his wife's fondness for rouge and carmine, complains that he can never make pure, unsophisticated way to her cheek, but is obliged, like Pyramus in the story, to kiss through a wall,—to salute through a crust of paints and washes:

"Wall, vile wall, which did these lovers sunder."

This, it has been well observed, "is bad enough; yet the

object of paint is to imitate health and loveliness; the *wish* to look well is in it." But snuff! what a death-blow does it give to all that romance and poetry with which man delights to invest the other sex! How vulgar the thought that a sneeze should interrupt a kiss or a sigh! Fancy a young beauty, to whom her lover on his knees, after a protracted and sentimental courtship, has just closed a tremulous avowal of his passion with the despairing interrogatory, "C-a-n I l-i-v-e?" sneezing out, at this very pinch of the game, what would otherwise be one of the sweetest of loving and bashful replies: "*Oh! Edward! this is so un-un-un-unexpected!*" What sylph, foreseeing the possibility of such a catastrophe, would superintend the conveyance of this dust to the nostrils of a belle! What gnome would not take a fiendish delight in hovering over a snuff-loving beauty!

The question who invented snuff-taking is an interesting one on which antiquaries differ. That Catherine de Medicis, who instigated the horrid massacre of St. Bartholomew, is entitled to the honor of so philanthropic an act, we shall not believe. If she did originate the practice, it was from any but philanthropic motives. It is well known that when she wished to get rid of offensive persons in an "artistic" manner, she was in the habit of presenting them with delicately made sweetmeats, or trinkets, in which death lurked in the most engaging forms; and perhaps she had the same end in view, in inventing and offering snuff. Whoever invented it, it was at the court of the grand monarch, Louis XIV, that snuff, with all its expensive corollaries of scents and curious boxes, first received the highest sanction, so that Molière speaks of it as *le passion des honnétes gens.* In

England, it became common after the great plague, from a belief that tobacco, in all its forms, prevented infection. Its use is also said to have increased very much after Sir George Rooke's expedition to Spain, great quantities having been taken and sold as prizes. Howell, in a letter on Tobacco (1646), says that the Spanish and Irish "take it most in powder or smutchin, and it mightily refreshes the brain"; and he adds that the serving-maids and the swains at the plow, when overtired with labor, "take out their boxes of smutchin, and draw it into their nostrils with a quill, and it will beget new spirits in them, with a fresh orjour to fall to their work again."

When William of Holland ascended the British throne, the prevalence of the Dutch taste confirmed the general use of snuff, and it was the fashion to be curious in its use. Valuable boxes of all styles were sported, and the beaux carried canes with hollow heads, that they might the more conveniently inhale a few grains through the perforations, as they sauntered in the fashionable promenades. Rich essences were employed to flavor snuff, and a taste in such scents was considered a necessary part of a refined education. Now, snuff-taking has become a practice as wide-spread among civilized people as chewing or smoking,—is the favorite mode of consuming the weed with men of culture, quick intellects, and elegant tastes; and in every country, the boxes,—which are the favorite presents of kings to their favorites,—are devised hardly less ingeniously, and ornamented far more expensively, than pipes. At the coronation of George IV, the bill of Messrs. Rundell and Bridge for snuff-boxes to foreign ministers, was £8,205 15s. 5d. It is estimated that in France not less than six millions of persons take snuff,

consuming each two and a half pounds annually, at an expense of over ten francs per nose! The bare duty paid upon tobacco and snuff in England and Scotland averaged in 1850 more than twenty-eight millions of dollars annually!—a prodigious amount to be blown away in smoke, or sneezed away in dust, at a time when the government was higgling on a paltry sum of £100,000 for national education. It is an interesting fact that snuffing is more a Scotch habit than an English or Irish one. We are told that an Edinburgh tobacconist, who made a large fortune by the sale of snuff, had painted on his carriage panels the following pithy distich:

> "Wha wad a thocht it
> That noses could ha' bought it?"

The consumption of the dust north of the Tweed is enormous. Every man who would have a smooth pathway in "Auld Scotia" carries a "mull"; it is a letter of introduction, a begetter of conversation, a maker of friends. Hence it has been said that the way to a Scotchman's heart is "through his nose."

Snuff-taking necessitates snuff-boxes, and it is interesting to note the ingenuity which has been expended in different countries in contriving and ornamenting these receptacles of "the dust." In France, in the age of Louis XIV, a snuff-box of some elegant material, whether decorated with paintings or resplendent with precious stones, was part of the necessities of a beauty of *ton*. Mr. Fairholt, in his late work on "Tobacco," states that quaint forms have been as common to snuff-boxes as to tobacco-pipes. Coffins were at one time hideously adapted to hold the fragrant dust. *A coiled snake*, whose central folds form the lid, was a box for a naturalist; a *book*

might serve for a student, and a *boat* for a sailor. Of a fashion in Queen Anne's time a poet thus sings:

> "Within the lid the painter plays his part,
> And with his pencil proves his matchless art;
> There, drawn to life, some spark or mistress dwells,
> Like hermits chaste and constant to their cells."

When on the death of Louis XV, the beautiful Marie Antoinette ascended the throne of France, the people were so fascinated by her charms and virtues, that a jeweler made a large fortune by selling mourning snuff-boxes in her honor. They were composed of *chagrin*, with the motto *La Consolation dans le Chagrin.*

It has been said that snuff-boxes enough have been made of Shakspeare's mulberry tree to build a man-of-war. Perhaps the most unique and useful of all these devices was a snuff-pistol with two barrels, invented about forty years ago by an Englishman. By touching a spring with the forefinger, both nostrils were instantly filled, and snuff enough was driven up the nose to last the whole day. *Apropòs* to royal presents of snuff-boxes, to which we have alluded, a curious secret came to light some years ago in England, showing the manner in which kings are fleeced by those with whom they deal, and the heartlessness of those on whom they lavish their favors. It appears that the royal goldsmith who charged his majesty £1,000 or £500 for a presentation snuff-box, was in the habit of purchasing it the next day of the donee for about half or two thirds of the nominal value, and that the same box was again supplied and again repurchased, till some foreigner, not liking the practice or the price, put it in his pocket!

The literature of snuff-taking teems with amusing anecdotes, with a few of which we will conclude. Every-

body has heard of the thief, who, being arrested for having "conveyed" without leave a canister of the dust from a shop, protested that he never knew before that it was criminal *to take snuff;* and of the anti-snuffing person, who, when politely tendered a pinch, refused with the rude declaration, that, had Nature intended his nose for a snuff-box, she would have turned it the other way, — a logical *non sequitur*, by the way, since by such an arrangement the organ could be less easily supplied than now. Napoleon's love of snuff has already been hinted at; not only on the battlefield, but at home in the council, he had recourse to the dust, especially when his schemes were unfavorably received, and he wished to hide his uneasiness or impatience. Unable to sit still in his elbow-chair, he would try in a thousand ways to divert attention from himself; and, among other devices, as soon as he saw a member's eye fixed on him, would hold out his arm, and shake his thumb and forefinger, to signify that he wished for a pinch of snuff. A box being promptly tendered, Napoleon would help himself to its contents, and then turning it round and round in his hands, would invariably conclude, in his abstracted mood, by putting it into his pocket. Not less than four, and even six, snuff-boxes, disappeared in this manner during a single sitting; and it was not till he had left the council-chamber that he became aware of the larceny. So confirmed was this habit, that some of the councillors, whose snuff-boxes were heir-looms or presents from foreign princes, hit upon the expedient of carrying cheap *papier-maché* or wooden boxes for the Emperor to pocket. The snuff-boxes, however, always returned to their owners, and, in doing so, were often found to have undergone

a very pleasant metamorphosis. By some necromancy, a wooden or tortoise-shell box, on coming out from the imperial pocket, was usually transformed into one of gold, set around with diamonds, or bearing the Emperor's miniature on the lid.

The distress experienced by inveterate snuff-takers when long deprived of their favorite stimulus, drives them sometimes to desperate shifts; and in such an extremity almost any "Jack-at-a-pinch" at all resembling it, is eagerly snapped up to supply the place of the real article. A severe snow-storm in the Scottish Highlands, which raged several weeks, so blockaded all communication between neighboring hamlets, that snuff-takers were at length reduced to their last pinch. Among the sufferers was the parson of the parish, whose craving was so intense that the sermon was at a stand-still. "What's to be done, John?" was his pathetic inquiry of the beadle, who had ended a bootless journey through the snow-drifts to a neighboring glen in quest of a supply. John shook his head gloomily; but soon started up abruptly, as if a new idea had struck him. In a few minutes he came back, crying, "Hae!" The minister, too eager to be scrutinizing, took a long, deep pinch, and then asked, "Whaur did you get it?" "I soupit (swept) the pulpit," was John's triumphant reply. The parson's wasted snuff had come to be eminently serviceable in this hour of "fearfullest extremity."

The last anecdote might find an appropriate place in Dean Ramsay's amusing book,—our next in some future "Reminiscences of New England Character." Some years ago, a clergyman in the land of steady habits, who was a most inveterate snuff-taker, commenced the Sunday ser-

vice by reading the fourth section of the 119th Psalm. Unconsciously, as he announced the passage to be read, and while the hearers were looking it out in their Bibles, he drew out his snuff-box, and took a lusty pinch of the contents, which resulted in a startling explosion of his nasal organ, making the style of elocution somewhat as follows: "*My soul clea-e-e-e-che-che-e-e-che-che-cleaveth unto the dust!*" The titter that ran through the church showed that not only the poor parson but the congregation "felt the pinch," and were "up to snuff."

INDEX.

A

Abbott, his Life of Napoleon, 174.
Abernethy, Dr., on mental saturation, 140.
Accidents, the cause of great movements, 188, 189.
Adams, John Q., anecdote of, 234.
Agassiz, Professor, unmethodical, 272; his attention to details, 277.
Allen, Col. John, 281.
Alliteration, 246–249; remarkable specimen of, 251.
Ames, Fisher, 107, 108.
Anagrams, 242–246.
Anglo-Saxons, Americans are not, 299–306; glorification of, 299–305; proportion of in the U. S., 299; how distinguished from Americans, 302; a heterogeneous race, 303.
Anne, Queen of England, curious portrait of, 253.
Archimedes, saying of, 222.
Authors, Dr. R. South on, 74.

B

Bacon, Lord, a taker of bribes, 193; on truth and falsehood, 217; not the father of the Inductive Philosophy, 218.
Balliol College, Oxford, 318.
Baptists, starved for heresy, 309.
Beattie, Dr., his sensitiveness to harsh noises, 35.
Beau Brummell, his snuff-boxes, 351.
Becket, Thomas à, his reply to a monk, 168.
Beecher, H. W., on Robert South, 79, 80.
Bentham, Jeremy, 137.
Berkeley, Bishop, his style, 51; his opinion about matter, 218.
Bibliomania, 336–346; examples of, 345, 346.
Biography, its misrepresentations, 192–194.
Blot, Professor, his lectures on cookery, 159.
"Bluecoat Boys," their origin, 327, 328.
Bodleian Library, Oxford, 324, 325.
Books and Reading, Professorships of, 136–158.
Books, as a means of culture, 136–139; original thinkers indebted to, 137; they stimulate and inflame the mind, 138; may be abused, 139; necessary to mental vigor, 141; often chosen and read ignorantly, 141–143; their multiplicity, 143–145; new ones published annually in England and Germany, 144; the number one can read in a lifetime, 144; difficulty of selecting them wisely, 146; number which a college student can read in his course, 148; should be re-read, 150; should be adapted to individual tastes, 151, 152; should be chosen for the young, 153; cannot teach the use of books, 154; how read most rapidly, 156–159; great prices paid for, 343, 344.
Book-Auctions, 336–339.
Book-Buying, 336–346.
Boyer, Dr., Master of Christ's Hospital, 331–334.
Bright, John, secret of his power, 284.
Brutus, illusions concerning, 191.

"Buncombe" speeches not tolerated in the British Parliament, 282, 283.
Burke, Edmund, his voice, 92; his pronunciation of "vectigal," 124; a rapid reader, 156.
Burton, John Hill, on bibliomania, 337; his account of a bibliotaphe, 342, 343.
Butler, Bishop, a great reader, 140.
Butler, Samuel, verses erroneously ascribed to him, 220.
Byron, Lord, quotation from his "Manfred," 31; on underdone food, 163; his affectation, 194; his influence waning, 287.

C

Cæsar, Julius, not a strong man, 130; his epicureanism, 166.
Calvin, John, his scurrility, 64.
Cambacérès, 167.
Camden, on anagrams, 242.
Cassius, Dion, his histories, 191.
Carlyle, on the taste for letters, 155; a rapid reader, 157.
Chamfort, Sebastian Roch Nicholas, 288–298; his early history, 289; wins prizes, 289; receives a pension, 290; his acrid sayings, 290, 295, 296; his excesses, 291; his witticisms and aphorisms, 291–295; his influence with Mirabeau, 291, 292; defends the French Revolution, 292; denounced, 292; attempts suicide, 292; his death, 293; his physiognomy, 293; his literary remains, 293; his disposition, 296; his dislike of marriage, 297; his forte, 297; estimate of, 298.
Channing, Dr. W. E., 132.
Charles I, curious portrait of, 253.
Charles V, Emperor, fictitious stories concerning him, 211.
Chatham, Lord, his voice, 91; his reply to Walpole, 216.
Christ Church College, Oxford, 311–315.
Christina, of Sweden, saying of, 207.
Christ's Hospital, an Hour at, 327–335; its "Bluecoat Boys," 327–329; when founded, 328; its eminent pupils, 331, 332; its master, Boyer, 331–334.
Cicero, misquoted, 206.
Clarence, the Duke of, not drowned in Malmsey, 200.
Clay, Henry, his voice, 92; a snuff-taker, 353.
Cobbett, William, on writers, 74; inspired by Swift's "Tale of a Tub," 137.
Coincidences of thought and expression, 207–210, 214.
Coleridge, S. T., his discursiveness, 53; aided by De Quincey, 54; his father's absent-mindedness, 38,39; a rapid reader, 156; his idleness and irregularity, 276, 277; at Christ's Hospital, 332–334.
Columbus, Christopher, 191.
Constitution, the physical, its power of self-repair, 135.
Controversy, ancient and modern compared, 63–65.
Cookery, importance of, 159, 161, 163.
Cornaro, Lewis, 134.
Corpus Christi College, Oxford, 316.
Cranmer, Archbishop, burned at Oxford, 311.
Cromwell, Oliver, 181.

D

D'Artois, Count, saying invented for, 214–216.
Davy, Rev. Wm., his "System of Divinity," 238, 239.
Debating-clubs, 284–286.
Defoe, Daniel, on "True-Born Englishmen," 302–304.
De Maistre, Joseph, on Bacon's philosophy, 218, 219.
De Maistre, Xavier, on methodical people, 277, 278.
De Medicis, Catherine, her treatment of her enemies, 368.

Demosthenes on oratory, 206.
De Quincey, Thomas, 9–57; his personal appearance, 9, 33, 34; his versatility, 10, 13; his remarkable dreams, 12; his literary vagrancy, 14, 53, 54; noticed in the "Noctes" of Blackwood, 14; his parentage and birthplace, 15; his weakness in childhood, 16, 17; his feelings on the death of his sister, 16, 17; his elder brother's tyranny, 17–20; his proficiency in Greek and Latin, 20, 21; his escape from school and wanderings in Wales, 20; his trials in London, 21–24; his love of English literature, 22; his acquaintance with "poor Anne," 23, 24; his life at Oxford University, 24, 25; his gift to Coleridge, 25; his life at Grasmere, 25; on Wordsworth's good luck, 25, 26; begins taking opium, 26; his account of its effects, 27–30; his picture of his home at Grasmere, 27; his opium-dreams, 29, 30; his "Confessions of an Opium-Eater," 29, 32; abjures opium, 31, 32; begins his literary labors, 32; moves to Edinburgh, 32; returns to Grasmere, 32; invites Charles Knight to visit him, 32, 33; dies at Lasswade, 33; his physical sufferings at close of his life, 33; his shyness and eccentricity, 34, 35; his love of music, 34, 49; his sensitiveness to harsh noises, 34, 35; his courtesy, 35–37; his ignorance of money matters, 36; his dose of laudanum, 37, 38; his eccentric social habits, 37, 38; his costume at a dinner party, 38; his dislike of shirts, 38; his treatment of books, 39, 40; his indifference to the fate of his writings, 40; his learning, 40, 41; his memory, 41; a close observer of character, 42; his power of detecting resemblances, 42; his critical acuteness, 42; his distinction between the literature of knowledge and that of power, 43; his criticism on Pope, 43; his criticisms on Brougham, Junius, Sheridan, and Parr, 44; contrasted with Coleridge, 44; his humor, 45–48; his contrast of the stage-coach with the railway, 45, 46; his "Murder considered as one of the Fine Arts," 46, 47; his pathos, 48, 49; his recital of a victory in Spain, 48, 49; his genius for the sublime, 49; his dialectic skill, 49; his "Logic of Political Economy," 49; his style, 50, 51; his remark on Berkeley's style, 51; his irresolution; his writings fragmentary and indeterminate, 52, 53; his apology for his vagrancy, 53; his conversation, 53, 56; his writings commended to young men, 56, 57; deplores the preference of foreign literatures to the English, 268; explains the reason of this preference, 269; censures the clerical misrepresentations of English history, 176; his opinion of Hume as a historian, 178; his estimate of the number of volumes that can be read in a lifetime, 144.
Dexter, Timothy, anecdote of, 107, 108.
Dibdin, T. F., D.D., his account of the "Roxburgh Fight," 343, 344.
Dinner, its connection with liberality, 160, 161; with kind feeling, 161; its intellectual aspects, 163; an index of national life, 169.
Disraeli, Benjamin, on the values of history and poetry, 185.
Dreams, De Quincey's, 29–31.
Dryden, John, when most inspired, 31.
Dumas, Alexandre, his ironical compliment to Lamartine, 204.
Dying words of great men, 216, 217.

E

Early Rising, homilies upon, 229–236; arguments for, 229, 230; objections to, 230–236; origin of the practice, 236; Robert Hall on, 274.
Education, Dr. R. South on, 75; the proper object of, 120–127; why needed in practical pursuits, 126; not all acquired in school, 149.
Elam, Dr. Charles, on the healths of senior wranglers and boatmen, 131; on the age of celebrated thinkers, 134.
England, histories of, 176; Hume's, 176–179; when named, 200.
English literature, its superiority to the Greek, 22.
Englishmen as orators, 283, 284.
Epitaph, curious, 254.
Error, its tenacity of life, 217.
Esquiros, M., on English diet, 164.
Everett, Edward, his toast to Judge Story, 114.

F

Fame, literary, 287, 288.
Faraday, Professor, 137.
Farragut, Admiral, at Mobile, 196.
Fenelon, his love of reading, 138.
Fluency, easy to acquire, 280; not characteristic of full men, 280, 286; a disadvantage in the House of Commons, 282, 283.
Fontenelle, mythical story of, 221.
Fontenoy, the battle of, 196.
Foote, the comedian, witticism of, 208.
Francis I, of France, his letter from Pavia, 205.
Franklin, Dr. Benjamin, his indebtedness to Cotton Mather, 137; not fluent, 281; on a vegetable diet, 168.
Frederic the Great, his knowledge of French, 265; an early riser, 229, 233.
Frenchmen, their love of epigrams, 213.
Froude, J. A., on writing history, 186; on the disagreements of English historians, 186; his history of England, 187.

G

Galen, his feebleness, 134.
Galileo, his "*e pur si muove*," 210, 211; not a martyr, 211.
Gallatin, Albert, Judge Story's opinion of him, 108.
Germans, the, their dislike of long speeches, 282.
Gibbon, Edward, his love of reading, 137; his history, 179, 180; anecdote of, 221; an early riser, 230; his snuff-taking, 353.
Goethe, his mode of studying languages, 267.
Good living, its pleasures relished by famous men, 166; required by the scholar, 167.
Goodness, dependent on the stomach, 159–163.
Graham, Dr. Sylvester, his bran-bread system, 117, 167; effects of his regimen, 117; his loss of popularity, 118.
Graham, John, of Claverhouse, 173.
Great men, often feeble in body, 134; their "memorable sayings" generally fabrications, 201–223; coincidences in their sayings, 207–210.
Greenleaf, Prof. Simon, as a legal teacher, 99.
Gregory, Nazianzen, his anathemas of Julian, 63.
Guizot, on moral chronology in history, 180, 181.
Guy, Thomas, 192.

H

Hackett, Dr. H. B., an earnest reader, 158.
Hall, Robert, on the conversation of Mackintosh, 102; on Dr. Kippis's reading, 139; on early rising, 274; on the beauty of Oxford, 308; his love of the pipe, 364.

Hamerton, P. G., on learning a modern language, 265–267.
Hamilton, Sir W., on desultory reading, 150.
Handel, his voracity, 166.
Hazlitt, William, saying of, 160.
Heber, Richard, his libraries, 345.
Henry IV of France, imaginary *mot* of, 205, 206.
Henry VIII, 166.
Henry of Guise, King of Naples, 189.
Henry, Patrick, his mode of reading books, 156.
Hill, Rowland, his denunciation of Charles Wesley, 65; his earnestness, 95.
Hippocrates, on mental differences, 159.
Historians, their difficulties, 173–178; Montaigne on, 180; forget moral chronology, 180; their love of antithesis, 183; their treatment of the old chroniclers, 185.
Historical criticism, 171.
History, Rev. F. W. Robertson on, 174; F. W. Froude on, 174, 175; its facts ductile, ib.; origin of its lies, 183–188; less truthful than fiction, 185; dangers of conjecture in, 186; its truth sacrificed to effect, 187; its great events caused by accidents or petty means, 188; its rehabilitations of villains, 189, 190; its disenchantments, 190–194, 223–228; defined by Voltaire, 195; some of its doubtful stories, 197, 198; its substance not forged, 224.
Hobbes of Malmesbury, saying of, 140.
Hobbies, 341.
Homilies on Early Rising, 229–236.
Huet, Bishop of Avranches, saying of, 145.
Hume, David, his history, 176–179; his death, 216, 217.
Hunt, Leigh, on the modes of snuff-taking, 356.

I

Iconoclasm, 224.
Idiosyncrasies of celebrated men, 366.
Illusions of History, 171–228; their supposed utility, 223, 224; their loss not to be regretted, 224–227.
Imperial Guard, the French, at Waterloo, 204.
Indigestion, its moral effects, 160, 162; its political effects, 16; the cause of military defeats, 164.
Inquisition, the, 173.
Irishmen, their contributions to American prosperity, 300, 301.

J

Jackson, Gen. Andrew, and the cotton-bags story, 202.
Jefferson, President, not fluent, 281.
Johnson, Dr. Samuel, his capacity for work, 131, 132; on reading, 148; a rapid reader, 156; on sickness, 160; a snuff-taker, 352.
Journalism, its effects on writers, 298.
Jovius, Paulus, on history, 175.
Judgment, the most valuable mental faculty, 124, 125.
"Juggernaut," errors concerning, 201.

K

Kane, Dr. Elisha, 133.
Karr, Alphonse, on tobacco, 348.
Kean, Edmund, his adaptation of food to his theatrical parts, 163.
Knowledge, its branches related, 151.

L

Labor, the limit of mental, 131; misdirected, 237–240.
Lamb, Charles, on tobacco, 347; his love of snuff, 354; at Christ's Hospital, 333.
Languages, foreign, study of, 263–271; Goethe's study of, 266, 267; why their study is fashionable, 268, 269.
Leigh, Dr. Theophilus, 318.

Lewis, Dio, on health and strength, 129.
Library, the National, at Paris, 143; of the British Museum, 143, 144.
Lipogrammatists, 240.
Literary triflers, 237–255.
Literature, that of knowledge distinguished from the literature of power, 43; its dependence on cookery, 163, 164.
Locke, John, misrepresented, 218.
Longevity, a test of strength, 134.
Lope de Vega, his lipograms, 240.
Louis XIV, his sayings, 207, 213.
Louis XVI, his parting from his family, 198.
Luther, Martin, as a controversialist, 63.
Luttrell, Henry, witticism of, 209.
Luxemburg, his endurance, 134.

M

Macaulay, T. B., his history, 174, 181–183; on Gibbon's history, 179; his injustice to Marlborough, 181, 183; his "New Zealander," 209; on writing for periodicals, 260; studies the German language, 265; anecdote by, 137.
Macclesfield, Lord, his advocacy of a reform of the calendar, 171.
Maclaurin, on the relations of knowledges, 151.
Madison, Mrs. James, her snuff-box, 355.
Magdalen College, Oxford, 321–323.
Malden, Prof., on education, 120–123.
Man, not designed to be a mere mechanic, merchant, etc., 125, 126; before the Fall, 65, 66.
Marlborough, Duke of, 181, 183.
Marshall, Chief Justice, anecdote of, 108; his logical power, 109; Daniel Webster on, 110.
Mason, Dr. John, saying of, 161.
Merton College, Oxford, 316–318.
Method, martyrs to, 273, 274; degenerates into priggishness, 277.
Michelet, the French historian, inspired by Virgil, 137.
Milton, John, his learning, 140; his violence in controversy, 64, 65; on linguistic knowledge, 267; on scrupulists, 278; and his daughters, 200; on earthquakes, 363.
Mint, U. S., savings in, 147.
Mirabeau, his indebtedness to Chamfort, 292; his reply to the minister of Louis XVI, 214.
Misquotations, 219, 220.
Mitford, Wm., his history of Greece, 174.
Moigno, the Abbé, effects of tobacco on his memory, 364.
Montagu, Lady Mary W., saying of, 225.
Montaigne, on historians, 180; on working by rule, 278.
Montpensier, saying of, 208.
Moore, Thomas, his songs, 287; anecdote of, 353.
Moral Grahamism, 117–128.
Morality of Good Living, 159–170.
More, Hannah, saying of, 162.
Moscow, not destroyed by the Russians, 199.

N

Napoleon I, his anagram, 246; his power of labor and delicate digestion, 130; his Memoirs, 173; a rapid reader, 156; his ascent of the Alps, 198; paralyzed by indigestion, 165; a saying of, 281; a snuff-taker, 353, 372; his habit of borrowing snuff-boxes, 372, 373; his death caused by snuff-taking, 365.
Nelson, Lord, imaginary sayings of, 202, 203; on the Battle of the Nile, 207.
New College, Oxford, 319–321.
Newman, Prof. J. H., on mental culture, 123.
Newspapers, advice to their contributors, 257–262; what are most popular, 258; "maps of busy life," 259.

New Testament, interpolations of, 226, 227.
Newton, Sir Isaac, 139; saying of, 145; mythical stories of, 199.
Normans, the defenders of liberty, 304, 305.

O

Opium, De Quincey's experiences with it, 26–32; its exaltation of the ideas, 27; the torments it inflicts, 27–30.
Order of the Garter, its supposed origin, 198.
Oriel College, Oxford, 317.
Oxford, a Day at, 307–326; beauty of, 307, 308, 315.

P

Palmerston, Lord, his power of work, 132; contrasted with Mr. Horsman, 283.
Parr, Dr. Samuel, 166.
Parsons, Chief-Justice, a rapid reader, 157.
Pascal, Blaise, 138.
Pembroke College, Oxford, 316.
Penmanship, microscopic, 252.
Philip of Valois, imaginary sayings of, 204, 205.
Piety, dependent on the physical health, 161, 162.
Pinckney, Gen. Charles C., his reply to Bonaparte, 212.
Pope, Alexander, curious portrait of, 253; his capacity for labor, 131; an epicure, 166.
"Practical" education, the popular idea of it, 119, 120; objections to, 120–126; true defined, 126–128; not incompatible with high culture, 125; its advantages, 127, 128.
Professorships of Books and Reading, 136–158; R. W. Emerson upon, 146; objection to, 154; qualifications for, 154, 155; duties of, 154, 157.
Prynne, William, 238.

Q

Quincy, Josiah, anecdote of, 234.

R

Races, the most powerful, 306.
Raleigh, Sir W., 172.
Readers, 339, 340; wholesale, 340.
Reading, the abuse of, 139, 140; cannot injure an active mind, 140; mistakes about, 141, 142, 158; profitless, 142, 143; should be systematic and thorough, 149, 150; effects of desultory, 150; should be multifarious, 150, 151; and have reference to individual tastes, 151–153; yet, needs an adviser, 153; manuals and "courses" of, 154; how to economize it, 156–159; method of Patrick Henry, Dr. Johnson, Burke, Napoleon, Coleridge, Judge Parsons, Thierry, and Carlyle, 156, 157; intensity of Dr. Hackett in, 158.
Read, T. Buchanan, his verses on Admiral Farragut, 197.
Rénan, on deceptions, 227, 228.
Rhymes, double, 252.
Richardson, Samuel, his novels, 288.
Richter, Jean Paul, on reading and speaking, 286.
Riddles, 253–255.
Robespierre, 184.
Rome, its early history, 190.
Rousseau, J. J., on "the profession of humanity," 126; his anagram, 245.
Roxburgh, the Duke of, sale of his library, 343–344.

S

Sainte Pierre, story of, 198.
Saint George, an impostor, 192.
Scholarship, not incompatible with practical ability, 125; favorable to success in all callings, 125; encyclopædic, 145.
Scott, Sir Walter, anecdote of, 209; on methodical people, 273.
Shakspeare, on feeding and fasting, 161.
Sheridan, Richard B., 193, 210.
Skepticism, its compensations, 224, 225.

Smith, Sydney, on indigestible food, 160; description of a French savant, 354.
Smokers, their excesses, 363.
Sneezing, its pleasures, 357, 358; scientifically explained, 358; picturesque description of, 359; why it calls forth the exclamation of "God bless you," 361; a good or bad omen with the ancients, 361, 362; superstitions about it, 361, 362; a terrific instance of, 363.
Snuff, a pinch of, 347–374; its consumers a serious class, 350; its influence on Presidential elections, 355; modes of taking it, 356; its adulterations, 366, 367; duty on, in Great Britain, 370.
Snuff-boxes, their varieties, 369–372; royal, 371, 372.
Snuff-taking, the best mode of using tobacco, 349–350, 363; celebrated persons addicted to, 350–354; promotes social enjoyment, 354; the modes of, 356; legal prohibitions of, 360, 361; time wasted in, 361; Boswell on its pleasures, 361; preferable to smoking, 363, 364; effects of excess in, 364–366; not necessarily injurious, 376; chief objections to, 366; effects on the complexion, 367; in the days of Queen Anne and of Louis XV, 367; fatal to romance, 368; by whom invented, 368; in France and England, 368–370; in Scotland, 370; anecdotes of, 372–374.
Solitude, De Quincey on, 17.
Southey, Robert, on Wordsworth's treatment of books, 40; an excessive reader, 139; his methodical habits, 275; value of his works, 275, 276; little read, 287.
South, Robert, D.D., 58–80; compared with Sydney Smith, 58; his birth and education, 58, 59; his studies at Oxford, 59; elected public orator to the University, 59; his sermon on "The Scribe Instructed," 59–61; on qualifications of the preacher, 59, 60; on the rhetoric of the Scriptures, 61; becomes a partisan of the Restoration, 62; his sermon on "Pretense of Conscience no Excuse for Rebellion," 62, 63; on the execution of Charles I, 62; his denunciation of Vane and Milton, 62; his sermon on "Man Created in God's Image," 65, 66; his sermon on "The Pleasantness of Wisdom's Ways," 66, 67; on the Roman austerities, 67; made Prebendary of St. Peter's, Westminster, 67; made canon of Christ Church, Oxford, 67; his discourse on "Christ's Promise the Support of his Despised Ministers," 67; his ridicule of Jeremy Taylor, 67, 68; his sermon on "All Contingencies Directed by God's Providence," 69; his hit at Cromwell, 69; refuses a bishopric, 69; his attitude toward William III, 69; his bodily infirmities, 69; his death, 70; compared with Hooker, Barrow and Taylor, 70; his principal characteristics, 70; his plainness of speech, 70, 71; his command of vehement language, 71, 72; his intensity of thought and feeling, 72; his aphorisms and epigrams, 72, 73; his sermon on "Extempore Prayer," 72–74; his style, 74–76; quotations from, 74–76, 79; his knowledge of hum an nature, 76; his coarsenesses of language, 76, 77; his wit, 77–79; his ridicule of the Puritans, 77, 78.
Speaking, public, excessive in America, 279, 280.
Spurgeon, Rev. Charles H., 81–96; his "Tabernacle" described, 81, 82; his physiognomy, 82, 90; his voice, 83, 91,

92; his Sunday service, 83; one of his sermons analyzed, with extracts, 84–86; his poor health, 86; account of an interview with him, 87; his preparation of sermons, 87; disclaims eloquence, 87, 88; his wit, 88; the secret of his power, 89–96; his audiences, 89; wide circulation of his sermons, 89; his popularity as a preacher, 89; his culture, 90, 91; not a theologian, 91, 95; his delivery, 92; his language, 92, 93; his pictorial style, 93, 94; his earnestness, 94, 95; not a sensational preacher, 95.
Sterne, Lawrence, 193.
Story, Joseph, 97–116; his personal appearance, and manner, 97, 98; his wit and humor, 98, 102, 114, 115; contrasted with Professor Simon Greenleaf, 99; his manner as a lecturer, 100; his elasticity and vivacity, 101; his qualifications as a legal teacher, 101; his prodigality of learning, 102; his eloquence on Constitutional themes, 102, 103; his descriptions of great bar contests, 103, 104; his anecdotes of William Pinkney, 104–107; his description of Thomas Addis Emmet, 105; his account of the arguments in the "Nereide" case, 105–107; his anecdote of Dexter, Ames, and Marshall, 107, 108; his opinion of Albert Gallatin, 108; on hasty legislation, 108; on young statesmen, 109; compares the elder and the younger Pitt, 109; exposes Lord Chatham's inconsistency, 109; his panegyrics on Chief Justice Marshall, 109, 110; on changes in the U. S. Constitution, 110; on the difficulty of framing unambiguous laws, 110; on the proper title of John Tyler, 111; on Daniel Webster's magnanimity, 111; his frankness in avowing his judicial errors, 111; his industry, 111, 112; his literary and political publications, 112; his economy of time, 112; his fame as a jurist, 112, 113; his love of praise, 113; his experience in borrowing money, 113, 114; his love for his pupils, 114; his tact, 115; on Shelley's case, 115; his panegyric on Courts of Equity, 115; his favorite maxims, 115; his early poems and orations, 116; his address at Mt. Auburn Cemetery, 116; his statue, 116; witticisms of, 234, 235.
Strength and Health, 129–135.
Strength, tests of physical, 133–135.
"Strong," meanings of the word, 130–135.
Study of the Modern Languages, 263–271; its advantages, 263, its difficulties underrated, 265; Mr. Hammerton on, 265, 266, 267; when advisable, 268, 270; why preferred to the study of English writers, 269; injures a writer's style, 269, 270; Schiller's and Moore's opinion of, 269; not necessary to a knowledge of foreign literatures, 270.
Suidas, the historian, 191.
Sully, Duke of, witty saying of, 207; on the battle of Aumaule, 172.
Sumner, Charles, his notices of Judge Story, 111, 112.
Swift, Jonathan, D.D., his letter to Halifax, 69; on the writing of history, 196; anecdote of, 219.
Sydney, Algernon, 193.

T

Taine, H., on style, 261.
Talleyrand, saying of, 166; credited with other men's witticisms, 212, 213.
Taylor, Gen. Zachary, his order at Buena Vista, 202.
Taylor, Jeremy, his style ridiculed by South, 67, 68.
Tell, William, a myth, 191, 192.

Thackeray, W. M., witticism of, 209.
Thelwall, John, his supposed reply to Erskine, 212.
Thierry, a rapid reader, 157.
Thirlwall, his History of Greece, 174.
Thomson, James, a late riser, 233.
Tillier, M., saying of, 149.
Time, economy of, 147, 149; how to economize in reading, 156–158.
Times, London, on a working constitution, 132.
Tobacco, its fascinations, 347–349; inconsistency of its enemies, 356.
Toplady, Augustus M., his denunciation of C. Wesley, 65.
Torstenston, Swedish general, 132.
Truth, its value, 228.

V

Vatel, the cook of Condé, 169.
Vengeur, story of the, 196.
Vespucchi, Amerigo, 192.
Villains, historical rehabilitations of, 189, 190.
Voltaire, on the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, 162; an inventor of historical "facts," 205; his reply to Haller, 208; his name an anagram, 246.

W

Walpole, Sir Robert, supposed saying of, 219.
Washington, his brevity, 280.
Webster, Daniel, on Chief-Justice Marshall's logic, 110.
Wellington, Duke of, 124; fictitious stories concerning him, 197, 204; on a great victory, 208; on early rising, 229; on speaking French, 267.
Welsh blood, in eminent Americans, 301, 302.
Wesley, Charles, denounced by Rowland Hill and Toplady, 65.
Wesley, John, on earnestness in preaching, 95.
Wesley, Samuel, on snuff-taking, 357.
Whately, Archbishop, on Gibbon's History, 179.
William III, of England, his power of endurance, 133, 134.
Winship, Dr. Charles, 134.
Wirz, the jailor of Andersonville, Ould's defense of him, 196.
Wit, a forgotten, 287–298.
Wolfe, Gen. James, 132.
Wollaston, 138.
Wolsey, Cardinal, 166.
Woodworth, 194.
Wordsworth, his good luck, 25, 26.
Working by Rule, 272–278.
Writing, fast, 261.
Writing for the Press, 256–262; an art, 257; its difficulties, 257, 258.

X

Xerxes, fictitious stories of, 197.

Y

Yankee Doodle, its authorship, 221, 222.
Young, Edward, 193, 194.

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